



Chas. L. Sanders.



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THE
D E N O U N C E D.

BY THE
AUTHORS OF "TALES BY THE O'HARA FAMILY."

— bright o'er the flood
Of her tears and her blood,
Let the rainbow of hope be her Wellington's Name.
THOMAS MOORE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE
LAST BARON OF CRANA.

CONTINUED.

VOL. II.

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THE
LAST BARON OF CRANA.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER XVI.

THE dawn of the next morning saw all our friends, except Pendergast, a good distance from those of whom they had present cause to stand in some distrust. At a miserable village of poor fishers on the coast, they stopped to rest their horses and themselves, and were supplied with a breakfast of oaten cakes, milk, eggs, and smuggled brandy. Rory Laherty unwisely declaimed for an instant against the difficulty of making way through the staple bread of the Northern province, and placed it in contrast

with the pliable potatoes and boiled beans of the South ; but John Sharpe soon arrested his criticism, calling him an uncivilized poor creature, who was not entitled to deliver an opinion on any such subject, and extolling the superiority of oaten cake over every species of food the South could produce.

Refreshed with a little sleep, as well as with their primitive meal, the travellers again betook themselves to their horses before noon. During the hard ride of the night, little conversation had been interchanged between any of them ; the urgency of the flight, and the dreariness of the road, together operating to keep the whole of the party almost silent. Now, in the cheering beams of an unclouded though not fierce autumnal sun, and accompanied in their way by interesting scenery, sometimes sea or coast views, sometimes as seemingly inland as if they travelled through the middle of the kingdom, their spirits revived, and they discoursed freely.

Their friend John Johnson, and all connected with him which had come under their observation, was their chief topic ; and Philip of Crana and Lady Dorcas were particularly curious to learn still more of that person ; more,

indeed, than it seemed at present possible they could learn from Patrick O'Burke, to whom they addressed their questions. Like his patron, Mr. Pendergast, he had never even heard of Johnson before his appearance at the bull-ring; and of his charge against Gernon, or his real motive for making the guardian of bachelors a prisoner, and running away with him. Patrick could form no idea.

John Sharpe, riding close behind his betters, had not as yet offered an opinion on the subject, because, as it appeared, no one had consulted him. At last, in answer to an indifferent appeal from Patrick, he drily and testily replied, "And how could John gi' a guess?—an auld naething of a body, ye ken; troth, jest;" but, as it seemed that he *could* give a guess notwithstanding, or at least thought he could, his ill humour was conciliated on all hands, and finally he gruffly condescended to instruct his hearers.

And very strange and vague insinuations he did hazard upon the matter, and in a very peculiar way did he commence the delivery of his oracles.

John Sharpe first asked Patrick if he had never heard whispered that John Gernon's

pocket was seldom empty, although no one could tell how he contrived to fill it? Having been answered in the affirmative, rather to save a lengthened proof of the fact than from any particular knowledge of it—for, in truth, Patrick's retired life left him few opportunities of hearing much city gossip—Sharpe proposed a second question.

“And maybe ye'll never have heard either, that Johnny, the dearee, was in the practice of vanishing frae his bachelor boys ance or twice the year, and spending a week, or maybe a month, or maybe twa months, somewhere or other, apast their skill to find out?”

To this also, Patrick assented, upon the same grounds which had yielded his former admission.

“Vera weel, then. Now, wha is the mon called John Johnson?” asked Sharpe.

“Why, that's the very thing we are all curious to know, good Mr. Steward,” said Lady Dorcas.

“Belike, your Laddyship. But, wi' your leave, Master O'Burke will make answer til me this time also. Ye'll be thinking he is ae bird o' your ane flock, Sir?”

“What mean you, man?” questioned Patrick, in great surprise and a little anger.

“Nae offence, nae offence til your ould het Irish bluid, Master Patrick; but I mean a Papist.”

“Oh, is that all? To be sure, he is a Catholic—he must be; witness his conduct before the market-cross.” In this opinion the Baron and his sister confidently concurred.

“Well, maybe so; and he is, just for peace-sake, if so you and your friends, Master O’Burke, will have it til be; for my ane sel, I make bould til say naething, only this—John Johnson is as much of a Papist the morn, or was yesterday, as John Sharpe is or was—the Lord shield him frae ony such falling off!” the speaker’s late angry notions of forsaking his old faith was obliterated by his more recent and still unsubdued testiness against what he had chosen to consider as neglect of him, on the part of his Catholic fellow-travellers.

Laughing slightly and tolerantly at the insinuation contained in his pious prayer, the party still pressed him to vouchsafe an explanation.

“Oh, of a certainty, and to the best of my

skill; and why not, as in duty bound, at the will of the grandees, the world over." Good-humoured as had been their laugh, it did not add to his amiable mood. "Master O'Burke, you rock o' sense, I'll be talking til you agin. There's such people living as the Johnsons o' the Fews, I believe."

"Yes, John; I have heard of that courageous family," answered Patrick.

"And what of them, if it please you, Sir?"

"Why, that they are the most daring pursuers and takers of Rapparees in all Ireland; that they have already made prisoners of many of Randal Oge O'Hagan's gang; and for some time have been hot-foot from the North to the South, and back again, after Randal himself. The high price offered for his head, (on his shoulders or off,) by Government, being supposed to quicken their zeal and adventure."

"See there, then!" remarked Sharpe, and was silent.

Patrick entreated him to conclude, but he only smiled contemptuously, asking, "And ye canna mak' it out, a'tween ye, yet, grandees? ye canna jest tack that and that thegether? Uh, hu."

“Do you mean, John, that our friend is one of the noted thief-catching family?” continued Patrick.

“Maybe I don’t; why should I? Little it becomes ane like me to mean anything.”

“He assents,” whispered Patrick to his friends. “Well, John, if such be the case, he must needs be a good Protestant, as all his race, root and branch, are.”

“Believe it, believe it, hinny.”

“But why, then, pretend to be a Catholic yesterday, at the bull-ring?”

“Ask him, Master O’Burke.”

“And more especially last night, at Pendergast Hall? for surely his proffer of our swords to the Baron of Crana and myself, with other things, could only be meant to show an interest in us, that might pass for the interest of a fellow-believer?”

“Ask him, ask him, I say til you again, Sir;—do; and maybe he’d tell you; ane thing is certain, he can if so he likes;—ay, and anither thing is jest as certain—nae one can tell ye for him—nae leeving creature, unless a brother, or a cousin o’ his, or his father, maybe. I am not gaun to attempt a satisfaction for your ques-

tions, Master O'Burke ; it's apast my skill and schooling ; nathless, I am content to think, that whatever a Johnson does upon one of his plans for trapping a Rapparee, may turn out to have a reason in it after a'—troth, jest ;—they dinna pass for fules, nae mair than for men of low stature, or narrow shouthers, the whole kith and kin of them, thae Johnsons ; but have as mony turns in their heads, and as mony shifts and expedients, as the born Rapparees they spend their lives in hunting down—ay, as Randal Oge O'Hagan his ain sel', though that 's a big word in their praise."

John Sharpe certainly sketched with a faithful hand, in his own style, the characters of the celebrated family of the Johnsons of the Fews, who indeed, about this time, formed themselves into a kind of self-elected police for apprehending Rapparees all over Ireland, but particularly in the North. They lived near Carlingford Bay, upon or close to the junction of three counties, those of Down, Armagh, and Louth, the latter a Leinster county ; and so were well situated for a sortie, at a short notice, in any direction of the country, against the flitting objects of their laudable hostility. Athletic,

brave, and men of much mental shrewdness and cleverness, and withal a numerous clan, they were accounted public blessings in those times, when bad roads, and an imperfect system of civil jurisdiction, left the traveller at the mercy of numerous bands of such freebooters as they waged war against. Indeed, the Rapparees feared no other foes. Of the detachments of soldiers occasionally sent against them, under the control of a sheriff or of a magistrate, they made very little account; but for the Johnsons of the Fews, whose knowledge of the country was equal to their own, and whose spirit of enterprise, sagacity in pursuit, and ingenuity in counter contrivances to effect an arrest, much resembled their own, the wild banditti entertained and admitted much honourable respect. It may be added, that the seemingly patriotic corps of thief-catchers found their account in this self-devotion in upholding the laws of the land; for scarce a Rapparee's head but was worth money; and, as Patrick O'Burke has intimated in the case of Randal Oge O'Hagan, upon the heads of the more daring of their chiefs, prices had been fixed to almost an enormous amount.

Patrick O'Burke continued his interrogatories to his attendant.

"So, John, having made a good case of identity in favour of our new acquaintance, at your own will and pleasure, let us pass to inquire into the nature of his displeasure against poor John Gernon. Beforehand, however, allow me a last question touching himself, namely—Is it only because his name is Johnson, that you set him down as one of the Few-men?"

"Maybe I have anither reason; maybe no," answered Sharpe; "who knows?"

"If you have another, I pray you acquaint me with it."

"Oh, it will prove of nae importance, belike."

"No matter,—declare it."

"Why then, jest this, Master Patrick—he happened til tell me who he was his ain sel'.

"When—where, for Heaven's sake!"

"From ahint a door, in the lower regions of Pendergast Hall," answered Sharpe.

"And last night? as you remained out of the parlour in search of the lights?"

"Even sae, Master O'Burke; by the same token, a cousin of his was at his side when he gave me the whisper, jest to keep my tongue

atween my teeth and mak' nae noise, but let him do his ain work, according to his ain liking."

"You surprise me now, in truth, John. Why I chanced on him myself, in another part of the house, and he gave me no such confidential explanation."

"You had too much sense for it, maybe, Master Patrick; 'tis fules are put to roast eggs, ye ken."

"I must compliment you, John, on your own humility, and thank you for the sincerity of the flattery you address to me. That past, let us both try to comprehend fully the case before us. It grows into something terrible, I swear! Here, as I conclude, you would have a Johnson of the Fewes making a prisoner of the poor Mayor of Bull-ring, just in the natural discharge of his usual vocation."

"Ah! aha! and ye'll be beginning to put things in a string, will ye, Master O'Burke?"

"Why then, John Sharpe, the next thing to go in a string is this—Gernon is a Rapparee!"

"And the next after that, will be his ain sel' anent being found out for ane—troth, jest."

"Again I ask you, have you more than your own fancies for the opinion?"

“Fancies, Master Patrick? I am ower ould to fill my head wi’ fancies, I hope.”

“Well, well—more than your own excellent judgment?”

“Yes, then; a wee bit more.”

“Johnson’s own assertion once again?”

“Or ae thing very like til it, I am thinking.”

Patrick looked at his friends, and they at him, in much interest.

“And it’s very unlikely,” continued Sharpe, “that Johnson would tell me a lee for nae reason under the clouds, at that moment; more be token, canna ye bring til your mind, Master O’Burke, any support for his words out of the opening of our discourse on this matter?”

“No truly, John,” answered Patrick, after a pause; for Sharpe’s preparatory propositions had, indeed, passed but lightly over him.

“I was e’en guessing as much,” said John.

“Let me try,” volunteered Lady Dorcas: “First, Mr. Steward, you called on us to notice that John Gernon’s purse used ever to be filled, no one could surmise how.”

“That’s like some o’t, of a truth,” agreed Sharpe.

“Second, that he was in the habit of disap-

pearing from his native town for weeks and months at a time, no one could surmise whither."

"Richt—vera richt, your Ledyship, nae matter whare *ye* had your schooling," he continued, glancing disapprovingly at Patrick.

"And now I draw my conclusions from these two facts, and what you have since said—Gernon filled his purse by Torying it, in disguise, about our peaceable land, and was so employed during his absence, now and then, from before the eyes of his jolly bachelors—praise me, Sir, if my reading is still right."

"I only mak' bould til say," he replied, "that I could pray to the Lord other folk had your Ledyship's woman's wit.—And now, gentleels, I have but ae word mair til throw in, and believe it wha likes; and til save idle questioning, I give notice that what I am gaun til deliver is my ain 'fancy,' if so it pleases ony o' my betters til use the word agin: whilk is as much as if I said that the discovery has been made in my ain noddle, and without help or hint frae John Johnson, or ae mon, woman, or bairn, on the face o' the 'arth; and now—answer me wha can—what have I in my mind til speak out, amang ye?"—and John Sharpe

glanced from one to another of his hearers with an expression of in-felt sagacity, joined to his usual importance.

"I confess to you, John, I cannot imagine," said Patrick, in a grave, self-accusing manner.

"Nor I," echoed Philip Walshe.

"I do not answer till Master Sharpe gives us all one little chance for a guess," laughed Lady Dorcas; "Pray oblige us, Sir—whatever you are going to say relates to John Gernon, does it?"

"Well; and it does," assented Sharpe, "and there now—I ge' ye a' that chance."

"Still I gain no ray of light," rejoined Patrick.

"Sows' ears and purses," muttered Sharpe, half loth to trust himself upon the proverb at length, but he thought it over, bitterly—"hard to mak' a purse out o' a sow's ear."

"Perhaps all honest John's warrants and what not, yester evening, were but waste paper," surmised the Baron; "and that he but came to rob us of our swords and money, in a genteel way, *à la* Randal Oge O'Hagan?"

"Better to say so much than to say naething at a', it shows there's some warking in the

brain-pan," answered John, again looking chidingly at Patrick, who, it need scarce be added, enjoyed with his friends, John's election of himself into the office of Mentor of his master's adopted son—"Nathless, ye have not shot near til the mark yet, Baron. The Leddy Dorcas will tell us her notion."

"John Gernon is somebody else!" suddenly exclaimed Lady Dorcas, in assumed energy of manner, and indeed only speaking at random.

"My beauty you war! my pet you war!" responded Sharpe, in real excitement and delight, and surprised into some habitual phrases of familiarity, by his sincere admiration of the fair sibyl's superior intellect.

"John Gernon is—Randal Oge O'Hagan his own self!" she continued.

"His ain sel', by the pipe between my teeth," asseverated Sharpe, changing his manner into a solemnity suited to his subject, and his oath.

Lady Dorcas, infected by his earnest seriousness, also restrained her smiles and laughing raillery, and seemed afraid of the truth of her own jesting thought; and her brother and friend again glanced at each other, while again there was silence.

After a moment's consideration, however, Philip Walshe laughed incredulously, and pronounced the fact quite improbable, and Patrick agreed with him.

"Though you have given us a moment's fright, John," added the latter, "still I am inclined to apply to this new divination of your's, the word you allowed us to use, if deemed needful, when you should have said your say."

John was, however, positive in his own opinion, and supported it at some length, though in his usual grumbling style. In the first place, he wished his incredulous listeners to observe, that the person called Randal Oge O'Hagan, had never been heard of in the North, or any where else, till within the last five or six years; and his first fame spread abroad at that time, just when Gernon was emerging from boyhood into manhood, and deprived, or depriving himself of all lawful and visible means of gaining a shilling. John Sharpe's next point was, that the freebooter never was known to be in the North, without its being also known that Gernon was absent on one of his mysterious excursions. He added,

that immediately before the last bull-baiting, the feats of Randal Oge rung far and wide, in the vicinity of the town and country the travellers had just left, and precisely at the same period of time, the Mayor of Bull-ring and guardian of bachelors was not to be seen among his old friends.

Patrick replied to this case of presumptive evidence, that, so far, Gernon's connexion with Randal Oge's gang might seem likely; but that he could be the outlaw himself, remained as improbable as ever. Many well-known personal characteristics of Randal, compared with all of those as well-known of Gernon, made the conjecture go for nothing. The one was talked of, even by the little children of the country, as a gay, light-mannered, gallant, and generous individual; the other's gaiety went no farther than sottishness,—and of his surly, dogged manner, and of his claim to gallantry and generosity, the late adventures of the bull-ring, and his visit to Pendergast Hall, gave a satisfactory account. The very popular portrait of Randal Oge, limned by each tongue that spoke of him, had not a trait of Gernon's heavy features, short stature, and bandy legs; and the

Captain of the Bachelors' company was even too young to pretend to identity with the flower of the Tories, and the king of romantic highwaymen.

John Sharpe met all this by asking one or two questions. What proof was there that the popular notions of Randal Oge's moral and personal attributes were true notions? Might not the idle gossip of the fire-side shape for itself an imaginary portrait of that celebrated hero? Might he not have taken measures himself to circulate erroneous ideas on the subject, in order to divert observation from the real features of his mind and person, that so he could pass unknown and undetected in the presence of individuals to whom he might have reasons not to become known?

"Very well argued, John," resumed Patrick; "Yet again hear me. The lips of even his sworn enemies—and those are not a few—have never accused Randal Oge of a blood-stained hand. If he cannot rob a traveller without certainty of a deadly struggle, he will not attack him at all. Now, God forgive me if I wrong Gernon, but I do not believe so nice a daintiness of human life is in his habits or his

nature. 'Tis also certainly said of the bold Rapparee, if any thing is certainly said of him, that never has he plundered the poor man of his shilling. Nay, you do not forget his still more generous conduct to our poor neighbour, Richard Langley?"

"What was it? tell it! tell it!" craved Lady Dorcas.

"Richard Langley," continued Patrick, "went to the fair with his own cow. She died on the road-side. A man came up to him, while, doubtless, he cried over her some variation of 'Drimendhoo, why did you die?'—and hearing his story, and his despairing avowals of not having now a hope or a prospect in the world, the stranger offered to lend him five pounds for a year. 'You must pay it back, Richard, the day and the hour,' he said, 'and you must put it under this flat stone,' pointing to one in the hedge; and so he left him. Richard Langley, again grown prosperous on the use of the money, did repair to the same spot that day twelve-months, and did leave five pounds under the flat stone. Scarcely had he turned his back to walk home, when the stranger jumped over the hedge, lifted up the money, called after him,

and said—‘ Stop, Richard Langley ; you are an honest man, and deserve a reward for your honesty. Here are the five pounds again, and five more along with them, not as a loan, but as a gift ; and if any one asks you whom you have seen here, tell them Randal Oge’—and Randal was out of sight in an instant.”

“ Oh, how I do love you, Randal Oge !” said Lady Dorcas : “ and yes, yes, ’tis impossible that the dark-browed Gernon could ever do an action like it.”

“ So I say,” answered Patrick ; “ and to show as much, I made mention of the story.”

But no reasoning, no illustration, could shake John Sharpe’s faith in the belief he had imposed upon himself. Randal Oge might have acted towards Richard Langley, as Richard declared he had done, merely for a purpose, and such a one as John had before explained to his company. If it had never appeared that Randal had shed blood, perhaps the wild and lonely hill-sides, could they speak, might tell another tale. And then the conversation of the travellers continued till towards evening, when some adventures of the road put John Sharpe in possession of stronger proofs of the sound-

ness of his own judgment than his incredulous companions had deemed possible, and, at the same time, led to circumstances which concerned the fate and fortunes of the whole party.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM the moment he left Pendergast-hall, the Baron of Crana's straightest road to his own castle was the most directly Southern one he could have taken. He preferred, however, an Eastern course in the first instance, both because it would be less open to suspicion, in case of pursuit by the offended authorities, whose warrants had been disregarded under Mr. Pendergast's roof, and because, finding himself in the North, he was strongly disposed to make a visit to the Earl of Antrim, a friend of his deceased father, and who had been connected, like him, with the unsuccessful party in the late Civil war. And the proposed visit was not limited, in Philip Walshe's views, merely to a cultivation of the Earl's good-will; in fact, he

had some misgivings of the chances of a journey through a province distinguished for its zeal against all persons of his creed, and he felt inclined to approach, day by day, towards the residence of a friendly and powerful nobleman, who, in case of need, might promptly reply to an appeal for protection.

Hence our travellers have appeared moving Eastward, within view of the Northern coast of Ireland, upon the first day of their journey. Towards sunset, the road struck more inland, leading them to the town of Colerain, which they entered with some doubts of being allowed to pass quietly through it. Owing to John Sharp's orthodox accent, however, and his making good use of it, in ordering, reprehending, and controlling every body and every thing, they once more emerged into the open country without molestation, and even much the better of the larder, cookery, and wine-cellar of the inn at which they rested.

Some miles outside the town, the road divided, running, at the left hand, close by the coast, and, at the right, still continuing a little way inland. The travellers pursued their way to the right.

After proceeding a few miles farther, they saw four horsemen riding hard against them down a descent of the road, at a good distance. These persons did not wear military attire, yet the sinking sun flashed upon the scabbards of swords which hung from their hips. The attention of our party became fixed ; John Sharpe was the first to hint that he did not quite like the aspect of the armed strangers, and, under all the circumstances, it was quickly decided that they should be avoided, if possible. True, exclusive of Lady Dorcas and Mistress Louise, the travellers were numerous enough to withstand a challenge from four horsemen, of whatever kind it might prove to be ; the Baron, Patrick, John Sharpe, Rory Laherty, and the Baron's two attendants, made up six good men ; but they had no weapons ; and, moreover, broils of every kind were best avoided when ladies were to be protected.

This determination was taken as all halted at the angle of a narrow and broken road to their left, in fact, the termination of the coast-road, now sweeping into the more inland one, which they had declined pursuing at its commencement, some miles outside Colerain. At present,

however ; it seemed very opportune for their purpose, and as the approaching riders became momentarily lost to view by a curve of the highway before them, they wheeled rapidly upon it, and put their horses to full speed.

It will be observed, that in consequence of this movement, they re-approached Colerain by a line nearly parallel to that which had led them from the town. The neglected state of the present narrow road, full of inequalities, and strewn with stones, did not long permit their horses to make rapid progress ; and John Sharpe often listened for the sounds of pursuit in their rear. No one appeared to be coming on from behind, and the fugitives slackened their reins, and, deeming that they had unnecessarily alarmed themselves, began to think of retracing their steps, and continuing their journey Eastward. Still they slowly moved in an opposite direction, at an undecided pace.

Hitherto they had been winding to the coast from the inland road, between swells of land which shut out every other object, save the sky. Suddenly, the way grew steep, and, making an angle in the middle of its descent, placed them before a scene so striking, that,

with exclamations of surprise and pleasure, all stood still to contemplate it. To the right, at but a very little distance, the coast terminated in a gigantic mass of rock, falling almost perpendicularly into the waves, its summit more than a hundred feet above them. Upon this rock, covering nearly its whole extent, arose the ruins of an old castle, of which the rent and shivered gables and chimneys presented the most fantastic forms. Behind them spread the sea. Crossing their many pointed top-outline, like a vapour, ran a narrow tongue of brownish land, in the middle distance. Above this, and much farther off—a fore-shortened expanse of water parting both—floated an irregularly conical hill, from the right-hand termination of which, flowed the horizontal line of the ocean. And down upon that line, the autumn sun was sinking in unclouded power, casting over it his radiance, till there remained but a golden dream of a division between the heavens and the waters; onward, across the hushed waves, rolled his effluent splendour, heightened by the reflection of the sky, which he had already turned into glory; and against this dazzling glow, savagely started up the

huge perpendicular rock and the crowded fragments of the ancient castle, both in deepest shadow, except where fierce beams came bursting in through a window-hole, a rent, or a broken doorway,—the ragged outline of points and shatters, all cutting blackly and sharply, against the sheet of living light.

“Yon’s auld Dunluce,” said John Sharpe, breaking silence, after the party had for some time regarded the scene,—“the chief castle of the ancient Irish M’Quillans, till ane o’ the Scottish clan, M’Donald, took it frae them wi’ the strong hand.”

“The cunning hand rather, John Sharpe,” said Patrick O’Burke; and John’s ancestral pride was rising, and an antiquarian and historical debate had like to have been the result between him and his ward, when matters more immediately important interfered to prevent it.

Down to the road, at the back of the travellers, swept a descent of crumbling soil and rock, scantily spotted with vegetation, from the summit of which they heard a sturdy shout; and, turning their eyes, they saw two of the horsemen, whom they had lately avoided, there standing still, but making signs to them to re-

main where they were, as if for a parley. Then the strangers looked behind, and again shouted; in a few moments were joined by their comrades; and, finally, the four riders plunged boldly towards the broken road, and gained it at a point between our friends and Colerain.

"They 'll be a few o' Randal Oge's dearees," muttered John Sharpe, "and winna leave ane o' us a cross to bless oursels on."

The foremost horseman drew near, and gave his new acquaintances a manly, easy, and yet not cordial salutation. He was a powerful-bodied man, with strong but not ruffianly features, and he wore pistols in the rude belt, from which was appended the large trooper's sword at his hip. His horse seemed as powerful and as resolute as himself: his three companions and their steeds were models of both.

John Sharpe hastened to answer his salutation, and he did so in a style not a whit less off-hand and distant than that in which it had been given. Previous to his taking upon him the office of spokesman, he commanded all his friends to be silent and stand together, while he should strive to parley for them.

"Well, friend," resumed the stranger, "ye'll

be on the road from the bull-baiting Westward yesterday, though your horse's head is not at present turned the straight way home."

"And if we were at the bull-baiting Westward yesterday, what then, freend?" demanded John Sharpe, in his turn.

"A civil question or two, and nothing more," answered his catechist, surveying observantly the group at his back.

"If that's a', speer awa', freend,—civeelity begets civeelity, ye ken."

"Thanks; but first a word nearer home: you and your company were bound Eastward awhile ago?"

"Maybe we were; Eastward, or Westward, or Northward, or Southward, or any ither ward ye like, or rather that we like our ain sels, according til the fancy of free and loyal men and subjects, in a free land."

"Doubtless,—why did you all wheel off o' the main road, to lose time upon this by-way?"

"Why have ye—your ain sel' and the little dearees at your back—jest done the same thing, galloping down the hill, yon, like born deevils, to tak' up mair of our time, and spend your ain?" counter-questioned Sharpe.

“ You are a cross-grained, cranky-headed old fellow, I’m thinking,” said the stranger, with a smile.

“ And suppose I am ?” still demanded John Sharpe, looking sourer than before.

“ Oh, nothing, as I have said, but the few civil questions touching the bull-baiting; for, assuredly, my cousins and I ought to be friends with you and your company, though we did not suppose so when you chose to avoid us upon the good road over the hill, yon.”

“ Follow your ain mind, mon; jest freends or foes, as you like it; but thae questions anent the bull-baiting maun be put til us in the contrary way frae some ye have already asked, afore we call them ceevil, as you promised they should be.”

“ Well, I’ll mind my tongue and my manners, to pleasure you, Sir; and now, hoping that neither will give you new offence, I pray you inform me if there was any talk of Randal Oge O’Hagan among the people at yesterday’s sport ?”

John Sharpe fixed his angular, red-edged, scowling little grey eyes on the man, as he replied—“ Nae word—but there *was* some talk

of ae freend o' his—freend, the wrong way—ye ken wha and what I mean, hinny."

"You mean a Johnson, do you?"

"Troth, jest—every inch of a Johnson."

"He appeared at Bull-ring?"

"You may say that, dearee; aye, and mak' your ain o' it; and ye can throw a guess at my mind agin, I'm thinking."

"Did you chance to hear his Christian name?"

"Maybe not; maybe it isn't—John?"

"You must be right then, by the Fews and the clouds over it!—Boys!" turning eagerly to his companions, "here are tidings of John. He *did* take the scent we supposed he would. This honest gentleman reports his appearance at the bull-baiting.—Thanks, friends, thanks; and let us now hope you can add to your good news, by informing us of his road, after the day's game?"

John Sharpe's suspicions of having to deal with a detachment of Randal Oge's gang were at once overthrown by this seemingly natural frankness, which appeared to include almost a declaration of the very different identity of the strangers.

"Why, the twa horned deevil?" he exclaim-

ed, in growing glee ; “ ye ’ll not turn out til be John’s brothers and cousins in guid earnest, will ye ? ”

“ To a staunch loyal party, like you and your company, the truth need not be denied—we are Few-men, every mother’s son of us ; and more than that, here, so far North, hot after Master Randal Oge O’Hagan, who has but lately slipped through our fingers in the South, and, as we can learn on good authority, is now abroad among your hills, though by stealth, as his gang is not at present strong, and he waits for reinforcements.”

“ I ’ll mak’ a wager wi’ you, mon,” said John Sharpe, grinning in self-important delight, and stretching out his hand.

“ With all my heart ; ” his proffered hand was accepted, and shaken till he winced.—“ But touching what ? ”

“ That he ’s *not* abroad amang our hills,” answered Sharpe.

“ He—who ? Randal Oge O’Hagan ? ”

“ Troth, jest—Randal Oge O’Hagan, the pet.”

“ No ! where then ? I repeat that my information is of good authority.”

“ And sae let it have been, but ’tis a thing

gone by. Ye had nae accounts o' Master Randal later than yasterday."

"There I agree—well?"

"Ane met wi' him yesterday at e'en."

"Ay! and that one my brother Jack?"

"Troth, and I'm e'en o' your mind;" and thereupon, John Sharpe gave a brief account of Gernon's having been taken prisoner in Pendergast's house—Gernon, who he would swear was Randal Oge—by the brother of his new friend. But while he spoke, every matter was cautiously and craftily suppressed which could disclose to the loyal Rapparee-hunters the religious creed of John's present companions of the road.—"And what'll be your ain Christian name, dearee?" was the question with which he concluded his narrative.

"Pat," replied the man;—"and there's Daniel for you," pointing behind him, "and Isaac, and Ben—every boy a Johnson. But now, no time is to be lost in coming on John's track, and learning how true may be your information. If indeed he has Randal Oge in hand, I little wonder at his marching him a day's journey or so, before he would commit him, into some neighbourhood well acquainted with the Rap-

paree's doings—this very county of Antrim would, however, suffice ; so Heaven only knows how near we may be to them. Once again, before parting, can you guess the route they may have taken from Pendergast Hall ?”

John Sharpe, after a reflective pause, answered that Gernon's captor had more than once spoken of starting upon a directly Southern course, and that therefore, in all probability, he had not entered the county of Antrim at all.

“The South road, then, will be along the banks of the Mourne, through Strabane, Clogher, and Monaghan, into Meath or Louth ?” questioned Pat Johnson, turning round to his namesakes ; they concurred in his opinion : and with renewed thanks to Sharpe, and a bow to his company, the four thief-catchers forthwith spurred their horses up the eminence by which they had descended to the road, and disappeared over it.

“No ; I know naething—nae ane thing under the sky—how could I ? Our John Johnson was not a Few's-man—no, to be sure—how could he ? And Johnny Gernon is Johnny Gernon, and nae body else. Oh, very well, and so be it, for peace sake, and amen.” Such were

Sharpe's self-praising ejaculations, as all watched the disappearance of the horsemen.

"The first fact is proved, I admit you, John," answered Patrick; "we await your proof of the second."

"Well, Master O'Burke, maybe it might come—who knows? Wait a wee bit."

"Though," continued Patrick, in his own mind, "even of that very first fact I can scarce help new doubts;" and he revolved this thought, in consequence of having seen, or of suspecting that he had seen, a face very like John Johnson's own peeping for an instant, during the latter part of the dialogue between Sharpe and the police of the Fews, through one of the windows of the ruins of Dunluce Castle; and if he had been right in his conjecture, why should a brother of Pat Johnson, and a cousin at least of the three other Johnsons, conceal himself from his and their observation?

An explanation of his doubts was soon proposed to Patrick. While the Baron of Crana debated with John Sharpe the question of insuring good and near quarters for the coming night—the recent occurrences having put it out of the travellers' power now to gain the resting-

point proposed upon leaving Colerain—a man appeared standing on one of the splintered pinnacles of the ruin, and making signs to attract their notice. The circumstance of his being opposed to the light behind him, as was the mass of building he overtopped, left his features less distinct, even at the distance he was from the spectators, than in another situation they would have been ; moreover, the excessive glow of evening was now beginning to yield to the first tender shade of twilight ; and yet, Patrick again believed he saw John Gernon's captor.

Having succeeded in fixing the attention of the travellers, the figure disappeared from its remarkable position, amid the lower intricacies of the ruin.

“ And what must needs be, now ? and what the deevil was yon ? ” questioned Sharpe. As he spoke, the same figure a second time became visible, from among a cluster of nearer ruins, which might be said to form almost the foreground of the picture already sketched ; and as soon as he now showed himself, neither Patrick nor any of his friends made a question of who he was.

“ Hasten from the road ! ” he cried, in an

earnest, yet constrained voice, after glancing warily around him—"I saw the whole affair—you have been imposed upon, and are in danger from the return of those people—hasten, hasten, and you shall know more—dismount, and lead your horses towards me—I will meet ye yet a few steps farther—" and he jumped laughing and saying—"What a take-in! what barefaced raps!"—clear of the broken walls around him, and trod firmly up a green ascent which led to the level of the road.

In much astonishment, perplexity, but full of confidence, our travellers disposed themselves to comply with his directions. The gentlemen and their attendants quickly dismounted; then Lady Dorcas, and the silent, reserved, but most observant Mistress Louise, were assisted from their saddles; and all stepped from the unfenced road, the servants leading the horses, to present themselves for the promised explanation. John Sharpe's puzzled mutterings were audible.

"Ladies fair, and gentles, both, a second good evening," resumed John Johnson, bowing with an air—"but before we can speak farther, in safety, please to follow me." He turned

round the way he had come, and, according to his invitation, was closely followed by our party, over much uneven ground, strewn with stones, and wild with tall weeds, into the nearer group of ruins, just alluded to: "and now, admire your situation first of all," he continued.

Between them and the great rock upon which stood the remains of the castle of Dunluce, appeared a chasm of considerable depth, so that, with the sea girding its other sides, and this dry abyss cutting it off from the main land, the rock and its extensive ruins seemed completely isolated; and Lady Dorcas, remembering John Johnson's first manifestation of himself upon one of the points of the latter, exclaimed after a glance around her—"But you came to us from the castle! How?"

"As thus, Madam," he answered, moving from the place where he stood, and springing off terra-firma upon the top of a narrow wall, which, rudely arched underneath, formed the sole approach to the principal ruin, and which the visitors had not before perceived, in the increasing twilight. Across this perilous pathway he bounded, although not a young man,

confidently and spiritedly, and, while Mistress Louise pressed her hands upon her eyes and shuddered, soon showed himself standing upon the edge of the rock of Dunluce.

“There is not the slightest danger, in reality,” he said, again crossing to rejoin his friends, “upon any firm way just wide enough for the natural movements of the feet; if danger appear in such a situation, it comes from the fancy solely:—May I pray the fair company to observe another remarkable feature of my present castle of refuge?” he continued, now at their side pointing into the chasm beneath them: “the descent is not difficult, even for ladies, and with the moon’s help—she is rising abroad, over the sea, I reckon—will repay those who take pleasure in the wild scenery of Nature.”

They were now at the side of the castle, opposite that which they had first seen from the road. The Baron, Patrick, Lady Dorcas, and her gloomy young friend, followed him down the stony and crumbling side of the chasm, and, with directions and example from him, gained its bottom. Here they stood nearly on a level with the sea, and perceived that either it or some

volcanic convulsion, had perforated through and through the mass of rock upon which the castle stood, making a capacious cavern from the outward face of the huge natural bulwark, to its inland face, which at present confronted the spectators: and, glancing along the rudely-arched excavation, they could see the quiet waters of the ocean trembling and dimpling at a great distance, in the first rays of the moon, which, as premised by Johnson, was just rising above the horizon, and, as if fearfully, beginning to assume her reign of weak light, at the departure of the king of day.

“A’ vera fine!” John Sharpe was heard to say, from the edge of the chasm over them, where he had sat down in no good-humour; “A’ vera fine, nae doubt!”

His scoffing tones reminded his companions, indeed, that their admiration of the peculiar objects around them was ill-timed, and they made all speed to join him.

“Vera fine, thae beauties o’ wild nature, doubtless,” he continued, addressing himself to Johnson—“but, if you have quite played your part of gallanty-showmon, freend, perhaps you will tell us why you beckoned us til come til

you frae the road-side, and what you meant by saying we were imposed upon, and ta'en in, and the like."

"Willingly," answered the person he spoke to. "I saw you in conversation with four men, who, from their demeanour towards you and your friends, and their riding off without plundering you or them, I am sure gave you false accounts of themselves and their calling."

"Why—did you not know them?" asked Patrick.

"The spokesman I did know, Master O'Burke, having once or twice seen him at a distance."

"And wha and what d'ye guess they said they were?" questioned Sharpe.

"Fews' men, I warrant," answered his friend, smiling.

"And are they not?" resumed Patrick.

"Heaven forbid!" cried the catechised person—"Heaven forbid that the brave and manly blood of the clan of the Fews ran in the veins of such fellows!"

"Wha then will the dearees be?" said John Sharpe.

"Tut, who but Tories—galloping Rappa-

rees, giving themselves false names to guard against your suspicions of their real characters, that so you might not be able to hint information of having met or seen them, if by chance you should fall in with some who are upon their track from the South."

"I guessed e'en as much at the first look o' them," resumed Sharpe, glancing about for approbation into the faces of his companions.

"Ay, John, but did not hold to your opinion," observed Philip Walshe;—"no matter, now: let us endeavour to comprehend this puzzled matter to the utmost:—Strange," he went on, turning to Johnson, "that, being Rapparees, they departed without robbing us?"

"I noticed their leader counting your numbers, Sir—excuse me if I omit giving you a proper title; but I have ventured to inquire it of poor John Gernon, and, even in so little a matter, his ill-timed spite would not let him oblige me."

"The title you give me is a right good one, friend, and for the present contents me." In saying this, Philip Walshe looked at the circle around him, to signify that he wished to remain unknown to Johnson. "But of these

Tories; true they might have remarked our advantage in numbers, but must also have seen that we were unarmed."

"How could they tell what might be in your pockets, or under your coats, Sir? And I can surmise other reasons for their forbearance: they were but a detachment from Randal Oge's band coming to his succour out of the South, I warrant: they knew well, how closely he has been pressed here of late, by my brothers, my cousins, and myself; they feared that a Johnson or two, or a score, might be within hearing of a pistol-shot; and so, upon the same grounds that caused them to assume other people's names, they spared, for the time, the purses of you and your party, Sir.—*You*, gossip," turning to Sharpe, "you told them all you knew, I reckon?" He laughed good-humouredly.

"Every word, and dinna begrudge them the good it will do them, the leeing deevils—the spawn o' the father o' lees!" answered Sharpe.

"And what said they upon it?"

"Pretended to rejoice at your luck, hinny—what else would they say or do? Ay, and wanted til make believe that they were all in

a haste to follow ye, and greet ye on the road I tould them ye took Southward."

"Or thought I took, rather.—And what road was that?" he demanded carelessly.

John Sharpe faithfully informed him, also quoting the names of the places through or by which, in succession, the horsemen had settled to ride in search of their brother John.

"Ay, indeed!" and so saying, Johnson turned his face to the ruins on the rock, and blew a clear but low whistle on his bent fore-finger. It was quickly answered by about a dozen of his men, who came springing to him across the top of the arched wall.

"Four of the Raps have just passed us, boys," he resumed, addressing them, "in pursuit of me, as they think, along the banks of the Mourne, into Meath or Louth. Jump on your horses' backs, and ride, ride, ride, till you come up with them, or cross them. I want the Tories here before morning." The men left him without a word.

"And thae lads will be Johnsons over again?" demanded Sharpe.

"True ones to the back-bone, Mr. Steward."

"I pray you explain to me, Mr. John-

son," rejoined the Baron of Crana, "why, knowing the four riders to be your natural foes, and part of the gang you and your excellent and numerous family are abroad in these wild places to capture—why you suffered them to pass your stronghold, here, without molestation or question?"

"There was more than one reason for my indulgence to them at that especial time, Sir. In the first place, although the making them prisoners must have been a certainty, it could not be done without broil, and perhaps bloodshed; and I crave of you but a simple regard for my word of truth, when I declare that I disliked enacting such a scene before the eyes of your ladies, mayhap to their peril, or injury, even."

"A gallant reason, if nothing else," observed Philip Walshe.

"Secondly, Sir, I make no doubt, although the outlaws passed unharmed by me, and even should never be pursued by a party of my relations then at my side, (a good fortune not in store for them, however,) that it was very unlikely they could escape to-morrow or the next day other divisions of our Few's-men, who are busily asking after them over the country. But

my best reason is untold. At our parting from our strong house at the Fewes, those of our clan to whom command was given over the rest, settled between themselves certain business for each to do, upon different roads here in the North. I know not, as yet, how four of my brothers, and many of my cousins, have speeded in their commissions; but as for myself, my commission is accomplished, and was before daybreak this morning; and hence I am entitled, even by agreement with all the Johnsons, to rest quietly for the present campaign, or until we meet again and devise other plans, although Randal Oge O'Hagan himself should invite me to measure swords with him."

"A thing he's in no condition til do the day, whatever may be his mind," remarked John Sharpe, fixing upon the speaker a knowing and confidential look.

"And well you may say so," replied the other, returning him his regard in nearly similar expression.

"By reason that your ain little business, as you told us, is done and well done, hinny," pursued Sharpe, allowing his features to relax into their grin of satisfaction.

“Again you speak the blessed truth, gossip,” smiled Johnson, nodding his head.

“And whare does he rest at prasant?” demanded John Sharpe; “ye ’ll ha’ sent him til ae lodging-house built strong enow til your liking, pet?”

“Not yet; and I am free to tell you why. I wished to commit him upon the very last robbery he has effected in this neighbourhood. To do so, it was necessary to become assured that the witness against him could be forthcoming, and willing as well as ready to appear before a judge and jury. I therefore sent, early to-day, to the poor man’s house, requesting his attendance at this my good castle of Dunluce; being absent elsewhere, he could not obey the summons till a few moments ere you appeared on the road; and then, as you may infer, our proceedings were interrupted.”

“Sae, *he* is e’en still in your safe guardianship, yon?” continued Sharpe, pointing to the rock.

“Be assured, he is.”

“Maybe I won’t—well, no—why should I—I, or any body else,” glancing at his fellow-travellers. “Suppose it, nathless—suppose he is

taken care of to this good hour, as you say.—Wha is *he*, hinny—wha is *he*?—tell us, jest.”

“You call him John Gernon,” replied Johnson.

“And you, pet, your ain sel—what may you mak’ bould til ca’ him?”

“John Gernon, too—and another name into the bargain.”

“Oge O’Hagan?” demanded Patrick.

“Hout, tout—havers and nonsense!” first answered John Sharpe, ironically; “how could ye think o’ sich ae thing?” Johnson’s answer was more to the point.

“You may hear the facts from other lips than mine, Master O’Burke. As I have told you, your appearance on the road abroad spoiled our solemn inquiry, in the noble court of the castle yonder; but accused and accuser still wait my pleasure there, and say but the word, and they shall be brought before you and your good friends, and the matter speedily ended by dispatch of the prisoner to Coleraine gaol.”

Patrick yielded a ready assent to an arrangement which proposed much gratification to his curiosity; and while John Sharpe rubbed his hands triumphantly, or often tapped the ashes in his pipe, Johnson again whistled towards the ruin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A MAN started to the rock's verge, in answer to his signal. Johnson gave the necessary directions across the chasm in a loud voice. The man disappeared behind a shattered gable, but quickly was in view again, followed by others. All walked over the top of the narrow wall; and, side by side with a very simple-looking rustic, and attended by three of Johnson's people, John Gernon appeared before the present controller of his fate.

Our party sat on stones within an imperfect enclosure formed by the few ruins on the main land. Johnson stood upright at one side. It was now early night, and the moonshine alone afforded a view, and a greatly changed one, of all objects and persons around. The huge mass of rock and castle blackened, except where rug-

ged edges of split and torn walls, of rude window-holes, or sharp pinnacles, just caught lines or dottings of white radiance. In this effect, it was more fearful than in the daylight it would have been, to see the figures summoned by Johnson's whistle come, like shadows, across the now invisible footway from the rock, as if threading the deep gloom of the gulph below. And when Patrick's eye rested on Gernon, it seemed, whether from the strong glare of moonlight upon his features, or from the working of his fears, or from the undisguised display of his long-hidden nature, that the bold guardian of bachelors had sunk into a very commonplace scoundrel, to be pronounced guilty upon the mere evidence of his countenance.

"We begin our examinations over again, here," said Johnson to the prisoner, "and here they shall be brought to a close, for the satisfaction of some old friends of your's, whom you may recognize if you look close at them, though I warrant you scarce thought of counting their faces upon your jury."

At these words, Gernon, suddenly raising his eyes, started, and then sent a slow scowl over the circle he confronted.

“Ye are there, mother’s pet-bird,” said Sharpe.

“Stand forward, witness,” continued Johnson, speaking to the simple-looking countryman—“stand forward, and tell us your story.”

The witness said that he had been to the fair of Coleraine, a short time ago; had there sold a horse and a pig; was returning home with the money in the evening, when the man before him—pointing to Gernon—well mounted and armed, met him on a lonesome part of the road, and holding a pistol to his head, robbed him of his little wealth.

“Did he tell you who he was before ye parted?” demanded Johnson.

The man answered yes; and that when he heard the name, it frightened him more than the pistol at his head; put to flight all notions of resistance, and flung him on his knees to sue for mercy; and the so much appalling name was Randal Oge O’Hagan.

From the earnest simplicity of the poor witness’s voice and manner, it was impossible in the least to doubt his story; and, after he had done speaking, a pause ensued, only disturbed

by a chuckle from John Sharpe, beyond all others he had lately given.

“ You hear the accusation against you, John Gernon, Mayor of Bull-ring and guardian of bachelors, otherwise Randal Oge O’Hagan, levier of black-rent, and Captain-General of Tories,” said Johnson, slowly and gravely. Gernon glanced up at him, pushing out his under lip, and smiling ; but he made no other answer.

“ Then you admit it as well as hear it,” resumed Johnson ; still John Gernon was silent.

“ And will say nothing ?” questioned his examiner.

“ Nothing ;” at last replied the accused.

“ So be it, then—” and Johnson drew forth a sealed paper from his bosom.

“ Nothing ; only this—” resumed Gernon—
“ I ’ll turn your present child’s-play into something more serious yet—for all that’s come and gone.”

“ Hither, friend,” continued Johnson, beckoning the man who had borne dangerous evidence against the fallen Mayor of Bull-ring :
“ by his hands you have lost the sales-money of your pig and your horse, and by your hands he shall be led to gaol.”

The countryman shrunk back a little, at this announcement, obviously indifferent to the honour and triumph of guiding the prisoner, alone, into the safe-keeping of the law.

“ I say it shall be so, and must be so, friend,” pursued Johnson: “ what fear you? his hands are well secured behind his back; he carries no weapons; here is one for you—” giving a pistol; “ and here is my committal of the highwayman, addressed to the gaoler of Coleraine prison;” and he handed the sealed letter.

“ *Your* committal?” muttered Gernon.

“ Mine—and it will suffice. True, I am not in the commission of the peace, and such documents are generally written by a magistrate; yet fear nothing, John, or Randal, commander-in-chief of loyal Militia, or of outlawed Rapparees; that paper, and my charge to this poor man, will safely bestow you according to your deserts. So good-night, and march on, before your keeper. If he once turns or hesitates upon the road,” he continued to the somewhat tranquillized peasant, “ shoot him as you would a mad-dog—Off, Sirs!” And with another baleful smile, and a chuck of his head sideways,

Gernon quietly walked before the countryman on his way to the gaol of Coleraine.

“Business being dispatched, gentles, let us speak of your intentions for the night,” resumed John Johnson, gallantly addressing his visitors.

Patrick O’Burke and the Baron of Crana said, that, from ignorance of the road, they knew not where to seek a supper and a night’s rest, at that advanced hour, unless they returned into Coleraine, which they were disinclined to do.

“No; you want more friends about you than you can meet there,” observed Johnson: and he proposed that the travellers should remain where they were until morning, partake of such homely refreshments as he could supply them with, and then try for some sleep, upon hay and rushes to be furnished from his stores in the old castle, together with heavy cloaks in which to wrap the ladies.

Under all the circumstances, his arrangements were approved of: Lady Dorcas, when appealed to, laughingly accepting them; John Sharpe recommending them out of a mere wish to cultivate the friendship of the accomplished thief-

taker: and Philip Walshe and Patrick thinking them not to be refused, when it was considered that Rapparees were abroad, and that on no road in the district could their fair charges be so well protected during the night, as in their present place of refuge, wild and exposed as it was, under the redoubtable guardianship of John Johnson and his men of the Fews.

With remarkable despatch, their host, by the hands of his followers, laid a basket of cold venison, cold fowls, bread, and good wine, before our benighted travellers, sharing the cheer himself, and playing the master of the feast gaily, and almost gracefully. From time to time he handed slices of the viands and the bread, and cups of the wine to his clan, the whole of whom (remaining after those who had galloped after the four strange horsemen) seemed to be now gathered together in the shaded end of the unroofed banquet-hall—Johnson and his company sitting at the other end in the moonshine, eating and drinking heartily, and chatting and laughing merrily. The provisions were quickly disposed of—and, indeed, he seemed anxious to have the meal over; at a few words from him, the hay and

rushes, and the warm cloaks he had promised, were conveyed in a trice, over the arched way, by his followers; and when he had himself adroitly assisted in making couches for our friends, under the most sheltered sides of the ruined walls, he took up the last wine-flask, filled a horn from it, and standing in the middle of the enclosed space, said—“*The duch-adhurris!*—good sleep, and good-night!—Follow me, boys!”—and turned away, not however, as if to regain the castle, but as if towards the road which ran by it.

“You do not mean to ride quite away from us, surely?” asked Philip Walshe, in surprise, and much chagrin at the prospect of being deprived of the protection for the night upon which he and Patrick had so confidently reckoned.

“It must needs be, Sir,” he was answered—“If Gernon, alias Randal Oge, meets a Raparee on the road, his hands will not long remain tied behind his back, nor I undisturbed at Dunluce: from the four points of heaven, he would collect his scattered outlaws—also falling in, perchance, with the four stout fellows who were near us a while ago, and whom my cousins

may miss ; then, bethink you, that owing to my present separation from my brothers and cousins in command, and the weakening of my own handful of relations, by despatching the scouts along the banks of the Mourne, I am in no condition to withstand the best that Randal can do ; so, praying your consideration of my reasons, and your kind excuses for my necessity, once more good-night and pleasant repose."

" But will you not think of our dangerous situation, exposed here, without arms, to violence from any comers ?" pleaded Philip Walshe.

" Rest with us some short time at the least, or wait for us to accompany you," urged Patrick.

" Stay, John, hinney," said Sharpe.

" Whisht !" whispered Johnson, suddenly starting and listening at the breach which gave easiest egress from the ruin—" By the moon above us, I have stayed too long already, maybe !"

" It will be unfriendly, or worse, to leave us now," continued the Baron.

" Huth, nonsense !" still whispered Johnson,

speaking in, to them—"Mother of Heaven! what does the man mean, and horses on the road?—ay, and at more than one point, I fear.—Take this—and this—and this"—he snatched pistols, carbines, and short swords from his men, and cast them towards our friends—"Now ye are not unarmed, and are tall enough to do for yourselves, the same that I must do.—Good-night! good-night!" and he disappeared, closely followed by his people all treading softly and cautiously, though quickly.

Here, then, were his hitherto well-treated guests abandoned by him in no very comfortable situation. If Rapparees indeed approached, in hopes of finding him in the castle, the consequences, considering the presence of the ladies, seemed by anticipation terrible. Alone, and now armed as they were, Philip Walshe and Patrick, with their attendants at their back, including the willing, the courageous, and the fierce John Sharpe, would have feared little. To cross over into the main ruin on the rock, and take up a position behind the old walls, covering any assailing foes through window-holes and crevices, promised safety, if not triumph. But it was out of the question that, in

the uncertain light and shade of the moon, Lady Dorcas and her friend could be urged, or even permitted, were they willing, to venture over the rugged archway, upon which a single false step was destruction. Nothing, therefore, could be resolved, but to await coolly and watchfully whatever events might ensue.

All remained silent after Johnson's departure, listening for the sounds of horses on the road, of which he had spoken, but they could hear none. They therefore hoped that he had been mistaken. Then they lent their ears to catch signals of his own galloping from the ruins; still the gentle dashing of the sea below was the only noise which came to them through the silence of the night; and now they made another surmise, and an uncomfortable one. If the thief-catcher and his clan could ride off so softly, stark Rapparees, of whose skill in all such matters they were but imitators, could advance with equal stealth; and again our travellers remained in unpleasant suspense, only whispering now and then to each other.

Half an hour might have thus elapsed. Suddenly, the fair moonlight and the sleeping sha-

dows around them were disturbed by faint flashes of red light, quickly succeeding each other, and then followed the sharp report of fire-arms, at a little distance, and at more than one point about the castle. Few conjectures seemed necessary upon this occurrence. The Rapparees had indeed surprised John Johnson in his retreat from Dunluce, and were now engaging him and his party, perhaps headed by the liberated Gernon. But many fervent though short prayers were put up for the success of the loyal Tory-hunter, and for his speedy and triumphant return to his temporary fortress. It was remarkable, that old Rory Laherty, who hitherto, in Johnson's presence, at Pendergast Hall, or since their second meeting, seemed least in awe of that person, although his fixed eyes took a lively interest in whatever he said or did, now manifested excessive agitation at the prospect of his being discomfited, often uttering cries, and apostrophizing him in terms of pity and affection.

The shots grew more numerous and louder, and closed round the ruins of Dunluce. The galloping of horses also could be easily distinguished. Presently, mixed with the other

sounds of hot engagement, groans arose from the road near at hand; then a gurgling wild shout a little farther off, and then a rush of footsteps towards our friends. The next moment, many of those who had gone off with Johnson hurried through the shadows of the mainland ruin, across the chasm, to the rock; and they had scarcely disappeared, when a man, in a full military uniform, more fashionable some fifteen years before than it then was, sprang after them, holding a carabine in his hand, and glancing fiercely over his shoulder. None of our friends at first recognized him, but Rory Laherty soon pointed general attention more closely to the fugitive, shouting loudly as he cried—"His own very self afore me once over agin!"—and then the features and air of their late entertainer and protector became distinct to all others of his party.

"Curse that yowl!—lie close there, and answer no questions!"—angrily whispered the object of his ecstasy, as he passed them like a vision, and racing over to the castle, was lost to view.

"That'll be it, dearee—that'll jest do!" exhorted John Sharpe, in great interest—"Sax

o'ye, ance ahint the port-holes there, can beg of a score Raps to stay at this side wi' us."

His attention was diverted by the hasty coming of other heavy steps into the presence of him and his companions, and little time elapsed until the four riders, whom John had parleyed with on the road, through their spokesman, made their appearance, followed by a man of stature so much greater than any of them, that he looked formidably gigantic.

"What! such fools after all as to garrison the outworks and they not in good repair!" cried the former speaker of the party, presenting a pistol—"But no—hands down!" to his seconders.

"I make a mistake—here are none of those we want—friends, rather, that some of us have seen before, or seeming friends at least—though there may happen a new question and answer on that head, at finding them in such a place, and so armed, as I see they are, at present."

"The arms are not ours," said Patrick; "we but picked them off the ground where they had been left by the men you are pursuing, and not knowing who was hurrying

hither when we heard the shots and the shouting, and having ladies of gentle blood to protect, there is surely nothing wonderful or blameful in our having them now in our hands."

"Perhaps," answered the man, "as a proof of the fairness of your intentions, however, cast them down, all of you, where you say you have found them."

"Upon what challenge?" demanded Patrick.

"In whose name?" seconded Philip Walshe.

"Upon my challenge, and in the names of King William and Queen Mary," they were answered.

"Hear til him noo!" sneered John Sharpe; "and ye'll be calling yourself over agin, if we were to ask ye, Pat Johnson, I'se warrant—and that's Ben—and that's Isaac—and that's Daniel, ye ken—and ha' ye found your brother John?" he continued, still in a scoffing tone.

"Why, yes, we have," replied his former confidential friend; "although by chance, and not upon the road you recommended to us—(of which a word anon)—and here he is, at your service," turning round to the very tall and equally robust stranger who had followed into the ruin.

“ Ay, here I am, and how do you like me ?” demanded that person, advancing and confronting Sharpe ;—“ You have been speaking well of me, as I hear, behind my back ; does your good opinion hold face to face ?” In the really laughing countenance of the young giant, in his voice, his manners, and his carriage, there was a lightness, almost a boyish playfulness, which caricatured his formidable stature and proportions.

“ Get awa’ wi’ ye,” said Sharpe, beginning to be much puzzled, and only yielding to vexation because he felt so ; “ I ken naething o’ any o’ ye, at ane side or t’ other, and I’se say nae mair than this—that I and my companions of the road have met bare-faced leears amang ye, the even, one wi’ anither, and I dinna care to fash myself in finding out frae who in parteeclar.”

The men smiled and looked at each other, as the first speaker resumed—“ No false words from us, of a certainty, friend ; the story we told you on the road, we are ready to tell you over again now, and to abide by it.”

“ And you’ll be John Johnson, the Tory-

catcher, in good earnest then, will ye, neighbour?" asked Sharpe, addressing the new-comer ironically.

"Why, yes, if so you please, and will take the word of my father and mother, and the book-entry of the parish, Sir, although I have not yet arrived quite at the honour you invented for me—that is, not yet laid my hand on Randal Oge's shoulder."

"But ye met with him on the road?"

"Why, yes," and those he spoke to laughed loudly—"Why, yes, we think we did."

"And what ha' ye done wi' the dearee?"

"Come, come," as they laughed again, in much seeming enjoyment of a good joke—"It does truly appear that you, at the least, friend, if none others of your party, have been right well played upon by one who is best able to do it of all living Christians under the stars to-night."

"I was tauld as much afore, and not vera long syne," muttered Sharpe.

"Belike; but you may hear it proved now. Has any man present seen this paper in the hands of the writer of it?" he demanded, holding up what Philip Walshe knew, at a glance

in the strong moonlight, to be the letter of committal, now open, which had been dispatched along with Gernon to the gaoler of Coleraine; and accordingly the Baron declared his recognition of the document.

“That ’s well; you shall quickly have where-with to read it by”—the man produced a scrap of a torch from his ample pockets, lighted it at some touch paper, which he kindled by a snap of his pistol, and in the ruddy glare, which strangely contrasted with the surrounding radiance of the moon, Philip Walsh read the following words aloud:—

“To the Gaoler of Coleraine County Prison.

“We hereby commit to your safe keeping, until his Majesty’s going Judge of Assize and a jury of the county shall decide upon his demerits, John Gernon, his body, for having, on the King’s highway, under assumption of our honourable name, taken from the person of Simon Peters, by force of arms, and by putting him in dread and peril of his life, the sum of fourteen pounds three shillings and one penny sterling.

“Witness our hand, this twenty-fourth day

of September, one thousand seven hundred and four.

RANDAL OGE O'HAGAN,
Protector of the Rights and Properties
of Benefactors and Contributors, Chief
Ranger of the Mountains, Surveyor-
General of the High Roads of Ire-
land, and Lord Examiner of all Pas-
sengers."

An unusually alarming cry broke from old Rory Laherty at hearing this letter read. John Sharpe, still out of humour with every thing and every one, because, with his own discernment and previous attempts at superior sagacity, said he would not believe a word of it. The Baron, Patrick, and the ladies, were less obstinate and incredulous, as several minute discrepancies in the character and explanations of the counterfeit John Johnson, although glossed over by his own plausibility, now occurred to their minds.

"All doubt can be removed on the matter," continued Pat Johnson, "and it may be necessary so to do, if only for the upholding of our authority; let us see those we crossed on the

road first to-night, on their way from this place," he continued, speaking through the breach of the ruined wall near him; and several others of his relations walked in with the countryman who had been sent to escort Gernon to jail, and with Gernon himself, still firmly bound. The former proved the identity of Randal Oge's letter of committal. The latter now no longer denied the fact of his having taken the price of Simon Peter's pig and horse, "only for a bit of sport," he said, under the name of the notorious outlaw.

Philip of Crana, greatly interested and excited, demanded what all the Johnsons next proposed to do. Pat answered, that they intended to let Randal Oge and his gang starve upon the insulated rock, watching them day and night for the purpose of ending their long warfare in that way, provided he would not quietly surrender.

"To attempt to cross over and fight him, and catch him, and tie him, were madness," continued Pat; "he and his boys would pick us down like curlews, one by one, as we walked over that perch, there."

"He may make a sally upon you," said Patrick.

“No fear of that; for just the same reason that we will not assault him in his holds, for in his passage hither we would have *him* under our carabines. I think, notwithstanding, that if one or two persons could win a fair and peaceable parley with Randal, he would not stay there to die the death of a disowned old horse, in a ditch; for, many and great as are his doings, there is a powerful family disposed to sue for merciful treatment of him.”

“I pray you on what account?” demanded Philip Walshe.

Pat Johnson glanced at him recollectively, and with a tone and manner which betokened a disposition to be less communicative, upon a second thought, answered, that till he was more sure of the fair intentions of those he spoke with, he did not care to resolve any farther questions. John Sharpe’s animadversions broke forth, but not heeding them, he added, that he had found the present company under very suspicious circumstances, lodged in Randal Oge’s temporary house, and with Randal Oge’s arms in their hands.

His spirit fully roused, his temper somewhat, and foreseeing that unless he could by some means fully satisfy the thief-catchers of

the groundlessness of their suspicions, he and his sister and friends might be exposed to more disagreeable adventures of the road, Philip took a sudden fancy, and drawing Pat Johnson aside, said to him—"You have not sufficient trust in the outlaw or his men to go across to the castle—you, or any of your clan—upon the parley you spoke of?"

Pat answered, "Certainly not."

"Tell me the particulars, and I will go alone then," resumed the young Baron, "and perhaps that may satisfy you that neither I nor my friends are a Rapparee's cronies."

The man accordingly whispered to him the name of the family who were interested for Randal, and the reason of their interest, and Philip Walshe moved quickly to the arched wall. The instant his intentions were guessed by his fellow-travellers, they one and all cried out to him to forbear and stay where he was. His sister evinced most affectionate alarm; Mistress Louise impassioned earnestness: but the person who, for some unknown though strong reason, showed surpassing agitation, was Rory Laherty. He screamed out, in his bad English, supplications, prayers to the Baron of

Crana, the tendency of his words intimating that he thought the volunteer was about to attempt the capture of the Rapparee; he even added forewarnings and threats of something more terrible than bloodshed, likely to be the result of such a meeting between them; he fell on his knees, weeping, in wild entreaty: and finally, when the adventurer appeared gliding over the black chasm, his own figure touched with moonlight, Rory Laherty ran after him, and they disappeared among the ruins on the rock almost together.

Soon afterwards, loud but indistinct exclamations, seemingly of consternation and affliction, were heard from the castle, by the listeners on the main land, and the tones were not those of Rory Laherty, although his wailings came shrilly too. Nearly an hour elapsed and Philip Walshe did not return. Vague but chilling fear, and a kind of horror, possessed the hearts of his anxious friends. At last two figures issued through a broken door-way, and slowly clambered down upon the insecure foot-way over the chasm. Midway, they were recognized to be the same persons who had gone over. The Baron of Crana approached his

friends dejectedly and sorrowfully: his head hung on his breast, and he sobbed. Without noticing the expectant Johnsons, he advanced to his sister, saying—"Dorcas, your ear—" and before he could utter a whisper, he embraced her, weeping.

CHAPTER XIX.

LIKE a sister, tenderly and beautifully, Lady Dorcas, her own tears streaming fast, in her turn embraced and caressed the Baron of Crana, urging him to disclose the reason for his sudden agitation.

“ Oh, Dorcas, dearest Dorcas,” he answered in a low and cautious voice—“ my only sister—my mother’s only daughter—my only—yes—my only near of kin in the wide world—shame and beggary—Who stands so near ?” interrupting himself, as Mistress Louise bent her head to listen—“ oh, you, Mademoiselle—but I pray your pardon—this is private discourse between brother and sister.”

“ Baron !” said the young lady, drawing back in haughty surprise, as if some previous state of acquaintanceship between him and her

had seemed to have entitled her to share his confidence, and as if she now resented his unexpected slight.

“Tut, tut,” he retorted peevishly, “there is a time for fooling, and there is not.”

“Fooling!” Patrick heard her repeat, in a suppressed but bitter and indignant tone — “and call you the past by a name like that?” she continued to herself — “*dare* you?”

Another person was nearer to Philip Walshe and his sister than Louise Danville had been during the few words of imperfect explanation which he had addressed to Lady Dorcas: it was John Gernon. From the moment that the strange cries had been heard across the chasm, that individual showed deep attention and watchfulness. When the Baron and Rory appeared returning to their friends, he stealthily shuffled, step by step, towards the place whither, as he seemed to conclude, the young nobleman would first repair; his present protectors, being on guard at the only points by which he could escape them, did not notice or heed his movements in the general interest of the scene; and thus he contrived to stand behind a fragment of the ruin, directly at Lady Dorcas’s back,

while her brother and she embraced, and while they conversed, for the instant they did converse. He also overheard the conversation between Philip Walshe and Mistress Louise, together with her subsequent mutterings to herself; and, it may here be added, he took especial note of every sentence which caught his ear.

“Speak now, dear Philip,” whispered Lady Dorcas, after Louise Danville had drawn back, and stood moodily apart—“no one can overhear you;—yet no—be silent!”—Casting an observant glance behind, her eyes encountered those of John Gernon, full of a deep and bad expression of interest and eager attention. Her brother, directed by her words and looks, now saw him too, and in much anger appealed to the Johnsons to remove him.

The men accordingly advanced, and led Gernon to the other end of the ruinous enclosure, exhorting him not to meddle further in affairs which did not concern him, and reminding him that although Randal Oge’s letter of committal was only a good joke, the testimony of Simon Peter’s was something more, and to be yet disposed of.

“But what in truth troubles you, Sir?” they continued, addressing the Baron—“We hope you have met no ill-treatment among the Raps, yon—?”

“Not from Randal Oge,” he answered, “nor, I am assured, with his consent; but, to tell you the good truth, I narrowly escaped with life back to my friends here; one of his fellows, after parting him, most treacherously attempted to stab me, and I know not how it was,” he continued, hesitating—“but I believe the thought of the unprotected state in which a death so closely avoided would leave an only sister,—that, belike, put me off my guard when I re-approached this lady, and brought some foolish tears into my eyes:” while speaking, he had taken her hand, and now he kissed it.

“You have said a false say, whatever may be your true cause of trouble,” again muttered Mistress Louise, who had walked far away from him and Lady Dorcas.

“He has; and you are concerned in his cheating story,” whispered John Gernon, near to whom she stood, without perceiving him. Louise Danville looked up at him with one of her re-

markable glances, as if she would satisfy her awakened curiosity, by reading his very soul.

“ We may speak of this again, Mistress,” he added. She looked away from him, slightly nodded, and turned off.

“ It does a body’s heart good to see such brother’s and sister’s love,” meantime said Pat Johnson, replying to the Baron’s last speech ; “ and not a Johnson of us but is glad you are again safe at the lady’s side, Sir.—But how sped your parley with Master Randal Oge ? ”

“ He consents to surrender two hours after day-break,” answered Philip Walshe, “ and to submit himself to your disposal, that so you may make sure of the heavy fine awarded by the Government for the taking him ; yet, he surrenders on your pledge of his being allowed free communication with the loyal and powerful family, of whose generous dispositions towards him you have yourselves spoken, and of whose promise to remember a good service done to one of them—their head and chief, indeed—in France, he certainly entertains his own hopes.”

“ As well he may, Sir,” rejoined Pat Johnson : “ the Cooteses, of Cootes-hill, are truly a

family that can save his neck, if any in the realm of Ireland can."

Philip Walshe groaned, catching at Patrick O'Burke's arm, who now was at his side, and Patrick alone heard the suppressed sound.

"And, as you say, Sir, upon Randal's report, doubtless, it was indeed the head of that family whom he stole from the French Jack-Ketch a year or two ago, when Sir Eyre Coote lay in a French gaol, sentenced to die for happening to kill a French grandee in a duel; body and bones, in spite of French bars, and locks, and bolts, off bold Randal flew with him, the Monsieus not able to guess how; and sure, Sir, one good turn deserves another; and I do think that it will cost Sir Eyre his whole estate, and the King and Queen his good services, or he will save Randal Oge from the dance upon nothing which you know, Sir, that he has been practising the steps for this many a good year, over almost all the roads in Ireland."

"Does he truly merit so well an ignominious end?" asked the young nobleman in a hollow voice, of which not a cadence resembled his usual gay and spirited tones: "I have heard

from every tongue that his unhappy hands are clear of blood, and that the poor man's wife or children, nay, the poor man himself, have never had cause to curse him."

"That is all true—more true than any one of the ballads sung to the tune of his own name," answered Johnson: "the rich of the land, and never the poor, have been his prey, to a certainty; the grand nobility, the well-kept bishops—(God bless their Right Reverendships! and I speak of them in all respect)—and now and then a richer man and woman than any of them—King William and Queen Mary, their blessed selves, no less; I mean of an odd time, when Randal has watched an honest tax-gatherer on his road, with a good round sum in his saddle-bags, to Dublin, and managed to borrow it of him.—But here lies the point, Sir, notwithstanding. It's always more dangerous to make enemies of the rich than of the poor; and Randal may bless the day he took the sting out of one of them, for that same reason."

"I agree," said Philip Walshe; "and now we take our leave of you, as the day will soon break, I reckon:—Patrick, a word without."

“ You are free to go, Sir, and thanks for your aid in this matter ; for our own particular parts, Sir, you will understand that we wish well to poor Randal ; neither spite nor malice is in our hearts against him ; only, let him put us in the way of demanding the handsome reward he is worth, and then luck and speed to the Cooteses and him, provided he turns good boy for the future, and mends his ways, and dies an honest man.”

“ Thanks to *you*, Johnson—” Philip Walshe shook the man’s hand, to his great astonishment ; then checking himself—“ farewell, I mean—come, O’Burke—where are our horses ?”

He was turning, leaning on Patrick’s arm, to the outer space where the horses had been secured. His sister called him to her side, and when he had obeyed her summons, eagerly besought him to acquaint her with the real cause of his recent affliction.

He told her that she had already heard it in the explanation given to Johnson. She looked incredulous. He vehemently assured her she had.

“ But your first words, Philip,” she resumed.

“ I know not what they were :—forget them you, dear Dorcas, however they might have sounded to your ear :—I repeat, I know not how

it was—I think I am no coward—some at my side in the field have said so—but that was indeed a very weak moment—let it now pass for ever between us—do not speak to me of it again—it irks me, by making me ashamed of myself—so, adieu an instant—I want O’Burke’s eye with mine to oversee our horses for the road”—and he left her, and again taking his young friend’s arm, walked quickly with him out of the ruins.

“Patrick,” he said, looking round to note if they were alone—“Patrick, good lad, I suppose your quick mind apprehends it? I thought at first to disclose it to Dorcas; but I was impetuous, and off my guard then—and ’tis better, much better to keep her ignorant for the present at the least—certainly for the present—but you must be my counsellor—and only you, excepting poor Rory Laherty, who, it appears, has had the secret buried in his faithful old heart ever since long before your good father’s death—you and old Rory, I say; and Patrick, as I premised, it has started across your thoughts, has it not?”

“Some loose and unshaped misgivings I have experienced, of a certainty, dear friend—but—that it could be true——”

“It *is* true, dear O’Burke”—he caught Patrick’s hand and wrung it:—“it is, and it has cut Philip Walshe’s heart through and through at the roots—make allowance for my weakness, good fellow—but oh, Patrick, that unhappy man—brother—now first seen and known—the poor, lost, lost Roger.”

“Baron of Crana”—Patrick began, wishing to expostulate, and condole, and advise: his friend quickly interrupted him.

“Baron of Crana—who?—You address *me*, and I have now no such title, man. No, no! but look yonder. There, upon that rock—among those ruins—like himself and his name—begirt with the savage sea at one side, and with common thief-catchers at the other—there, a common thief—and the surrendered prisoner of those blood-money men—there, good boy, skulks the real, and the last Baron of Crana!”

“Nay, nay,” said Patrick, “do not let too gloomy a view of things overpower you, in your present great and natural grief. Why should he be the last Baron of Crana?—why should not the secret of the outlawed Roger being yet alive, remain as profound, although you and I have come to the knowledge of it,

as it has done for some sixteen years? And, if so, must not you still be Baron of Crana, with an unattainted estate—ay, and your children, and their children after you?”

“It is not that—it is not that!” answered Philip Walshe; “it is not that, except in its application to poor Dorcas, which now most afflicts me—chokes me—God knows, it is not! But, O’Burke, think of *him*, think of *him*!”

“I do, and pity him from my soul; and you as his brother. How did your meeting affect him?”

“Poor fellow! poor fellow! naturally and strongly, lovingly and terribly. O’Burke, it *was* a terrible moment. I stood before him suddenly, almost unknowing that the old man followed me. He, deeming me come upon a bad design against him, made at my throat; we struggled, for I resisted with all my strength; then came Laherty’s shriek, and his low words—‘Sons of the same father! Philip Walshe and Roger Walshe, do not spill each other’s blood!’”

“Terrible indeed,” said Patrick, as the narrator paused, yielding to his emotions.

“When he heard the words, and had looked

long enough into the old servant's face to know him, he let me go, and fell backward till a wall propped him; and his cries, O'Burke, then filled my ears and soul—ye must have caught them here. I pass over my own conduct on the occasion; you will imagine it. The first moment of observation I could command, I looked towards him. There he still stood, supporting himself against the wall, one hand upon his eyes, as if he would press them inward, to turn the course of their tears. Soon after, he uncovered them, and fixed them on mine; and then his look, and the expression of his whole face, was pitiable, miserable—heart-breaking, O'Burke. Love of me, and fear of not being held worthy of my love—a wish to embrace me and kiss me, and a doubt of being spurned—ay, O'Burke, 'tis horrid to say, but I read the feeling with one glance of my heart—all this worked his poor features."

"Well?" asked Patrick, in a low, soft, and broken voice.

"Well?—I—I ran to him, and embraced my brother," replied Philip Walshe; the sobs and tears of the scene he described, returning at this vivid and recent recollection of it.

“And then, after some indulgence of your passion on both sides, ye spoke together,” resumed Patrick, anxious for his friend’s sake, to ascertain how far this discovery might seem likely to affect his fortunes and those of his sister.

“Yes, yes ; but to little purpose. Nor if I had rested on that rock till morning, could either of us have interchanged a calm word. But I am to see him again—that is—oh, pity me in your heart, O’Burke !—that is, if——”

“I know,” said Patrick, as his friend struggled to express his meaning ; then wishing to lead Philip Walshe’s mind to a less afflicting point of the subject, he went on—“And how came my father’s servant to know of all this ?”

“Roger, as I have learned from Laherty and himself, escaped in secret to your father’s house, after the Hillsborough affair, to recover of his bad wounds. While lying concealed there, he was outlawed in Meath. The tidings of the outlawry no sooner reached him than he fled to France, still secretly and disguised, resolved to abandon Ireland for ever. Some ill chance, I know not what as yet, drove him back to his own accursed country ; but during

his hiding with the O'Burke, one servant of the house, and one only, was in his confidence—that one, Rory Laherty; and hence the old man's recognition of him among us upon this unlucky journey, as well as at Pendergast-Hall, although, as he saw that perhaps years, suffering, and a changed mode of dress, together with taking little notice of so humble a man, kept Roger from recollecting him, old Rory, for my sake, and my sister's, and, he foolishly thought, for your's too, as our friend, would not give a hint as to who the Rapparee was, until, to save one brother from killing the other, he at last spoke out what he knew."

"And not so incautiously, I hope, as to make any of the wild people in the castle, at the same time, the wiser?"

"I believe, no; for, although his cries were loud, his words were lower, or drowned in them—but what does it matter?"

"Much; and you will agree with me to-morrow. Poor Roger himself—" Patrick paused.

"Well? well, O'Burke?" Philip Walshe looked up, as if he suspected the tendency of the delayed question.

"'Tis an irksome point, Baron, and I ask

your excuses for touching upon it; but if I am to be your counsellor, it is also necessary that I should do so. Are you so assured of your poor brother's principles, hitherto unknown to you, and not practised in the best school, you know, of late, as to make certain that——”

“That he will now keep the secret on which depends the saving of me and Dorcas from beggary? My life upon his honour and honesty, after all his trials and *nominal* offences against the laws!” answered Philip Walshe, with more of the brother in his feelings and words than of a dispassionate and disinterested man. “My life upon his honour and honesty, even though he could gain by a breach of either. But how could he gain by such a dishonour as you imagine, O’Burke? Think, and you will find you have not yet compassed the whole subject. He could only ruin Dorcas and me, by publicly proclaiming his present existence. He could not enjoy his father’s lands himself—not a sod of them. Let him be shown alive, and they pass from him, as well as from me, for ever. Besides, and worst of all for him, let him live for a hundred years to come, and be discovered living at the end of that

time, and he would die the death of a traitor and outlaw under the ban fixed upon him in Meath, even supposing him to escape all immediate perils of a death still more degrading to his memory and his family. No, no, I think not, I repeat, of losses in fortune to come from this event. His fate, Patrick, his uncertain—I should rather say all but certain fate—the yearnings towards a brother never before seen, though dearly loved upon report—of a brother deemed dead and changed into worms these sixteen years, now found a breathing man—and then so found, O’Burke !—But hush ! some one has been listening to us, behind yon large stone.”

“ I saw no one,” answered Patrick, hastening to the place pointed out by Philip Walshe ; “ and no one is now here.”

“ I did not expect you should find any one *now*,” replied his friend ; “ but I thought at that moment that a figure passed from behind the stone into the ruins, very indistinct in the shadow, and only caught by my side glance.”

“ It cannot have been so ; let us rather say that your alarmed state of mind has deceived you.”

“Be it so : but I will stay no longer in this place. Assuredly, O’Burke, not to witness the surrender of my poor brother into the hands of his vulgar and calculating hunters-down. Come, let us to the road, with what heart we may. In Crana Castle, if not before, you will counsel me as you can ; and there, too, I must await farther tidings of poor Roger. He has promised that a man shall speed to me, every day, with information of his hopes and situation ; the first rider to take the road after his communication with those great, and powerful, and loyal Cooteses. Come, my servants hold our horses, I see. Let us hide our true faces, and try to make poor Dorcas smile again.”

CHAPTER XX.

IT was again the sunset. From the top of an eminence, over which clambered a main road, a spacious semicircular view of undulating hills and valleys, broke upon the eye. Through the lowest valley winded a clear inland river; beyond the highest hill shot up very distant blue mountains of a peaked and craggy outline; all the land within sight was either cultivated, or covered with venerable woods; and before one of those woods, which ascended a rising ground at its back, stood, in about the middle of the beautiful, though map-like scene, a castle of the Irish feudal times, many centuries old, but, at the date of this tale, still in complete preservation.

Its defensive works of circumvallation were numerous and formidable. Its outward ballium

comprehending near an acre of ground, had a round tower at each angle, as also one at either side of an embattled gateway, with a portcullis, which fronted the road over the hill that gave a first view of the building. Within this area, or outward court, was the body of the castle, enclosing an inner court, of an oblong form. From its centre, opposite to the entrance in the ballium, projected a massive quadrangular keep, of five stories; wings extending from its sides, to the right and to the left, terminated in round towers, with small round chimneys: at right-angles with these continued the main body of the edifice, running back, until united by a high embattled wall, ending in square towers, with tall, narrow, square chimneys, and many of them. In point of taste and uniformity, the entrance to the inner court might have been expected in the keep, opposite to that in the ballium, which led into the outer one; it was found, however, in another front, flanked by yet another round tower, and having a second portcullis. But altogether, the castle was one of the highest class of those built by the Lords of the Pale, perhaps about the fourteenth century, and had a character of strength

and rude dignity, which called up the image of a martial and powerful chief of feudal days.

“ Ah, old Crana !” said Philip Walshe, as, with all the friends last found in his company, he gained a first glance, from the summit of the steep road, of the whole scene described.

“ Dear, dear Crana,” sighed Lady Dorcas, smiles and tears in her eyes together.

“ And you remember it, Dorcas ?” asked her brother.

“ Ay, better than many a scene of yesterday, although I was but a wild little child, as high as my own present knee, when ye sent me away from it.”

“ What are those low mounds of earth to the south, then ? I will try your boasted memory.”

“ The bow-butts, to be sure, where the quarrelsome followers of our quarrelsome forefathers used to practise their archery. And nearer to the castle is the bowling-green ; and close by the fish-pond, fed by the little stream from Lisnaliagh, or the townland of the leech, in former days, is your cruel cock-pit, Philip.”

“ The townland of the leech ?” repeated O’Burke, “ and had the physicians attending

upon great families of old, their own allowance of land, named after them, upon the Baron's estate?"

"Such has been the case, at least at Crana, and upon other old estates which have come under my eye," answered Philip: "in fact, the seat of an ancient Baron, here in Southern Ireland, tried to imitate a royal court in all things, though upon an humble scale: and many other proofs of the fact are found in the names of other patches of land, now visible to us."

"The pair, puffed-up creatures," said John Sharpe.

"Yonder," continued Philip Walshe, "are fields called after the ancient master of the hawks, of the cantred,—Ballysealgrave; in the other direction, surrounding the clump of old oaks, you see Ballfiaguidhe, or the townland of the huntsman; and the more useful than ornamental swineherd had his portion—Knocknamuck—nearer to the castle."

"Do not forget the merry tailor's little settlement,—Foiltaillieur—running towards us, along the banks of that dear little shining stream, from Gortnaceap, or the field of stumps," added Lady Dorcas.

During this conversation, Philip Walshe endeavoured to assume in his sister's presence his usual lightsome tones and manner. He had done so since their departure from Dunluce, many days before, and, it seemed, with sufficient effect to lull her suspicions of a more particular cause for his agitation, after meeting his outlaw brother, than that which he had chosen to yield her. Her own sparkling spirits had not fully returned, however; though when he questioned and rallied her upon her very unusual tendency to look grave and say little, she assured him she was not aware of what he attributed to her; or if now and then a shade did steal over her mind, it came she knew not how or wherefore. Patrick O'Burke was the most downcast of the party: and for several reasons. Philip Walshe's present situation took full hold of his mind, as much, perhaps more, on his sister's account than on his own, for Patrick began to struggle with unbidden sighs whenever he looked upon that very fascinating lady, and to redden and seem off his guard when she spoke to him. Then, he could not avoid feeling deeply and keenly that he was about to seek a second refuge under a second roof, which

was not his own ; and in fact, all his future prospects presented a confused, a gloomy, and an irritating subject of contemplation, particularly when viewed under the influence of the new sensations beginning to possess his bosom. As to Rory Laherty and John Sharpe—the former was all ecstasy at his return to the South—(though far from his old home, it was the South still) and he spoke Irish as fluently as gushes a long pent-up river, to almost every person he met on the road ; and the latter grew proportionately sour and critical, after having passed the borders of Ulster ; found fault where it was not to be found, as well as where it was ; called the pure old Celtic tongue, or the purest remains of it then extant, a manner of speech not becoming pigs ; and was snappish with his old friend Rory, if appealed to upon the excellence of any thing or object around him.

To the manner of tillage of the Southern province, to the dress of the people, to their breed of cattle, even of dogs, he had something to say. Nay, while all his fellow-travellers admired the rich as well as extensive amphitheatre of cultivated hill and valley, or of majestic woods around the castle of Crana, he depre-

ciated the soil, the crops, the trees ; in fact, cried out that “ all was barren.” And of the castle itself, his notice was peculiar. He could not understand, he said, the use or purpose of so much old stone and mortar, in a residence for a few quiet Christian people, or, at least, a few who ought to be quiet and Christian, though he left all that to themselves ; and then the senseless “ wheerleegigs,” or windmills, at the corners, and by the gate, and the big fool of a square thing in the front, and all the pretences for windows, and the make-believes for chimneys ; for he would warrant that the one-half of them had never been warmed by a puff of smoke, of as much consideration as warmed his nose at that moment—indeed the whole old barrack of a place—(castle, forsooth !)—looked very little like an abode that had often smelt of venison, or good ox, “ ae half hour afore the hour o’ dinner—troth, jest ;” and, in conclusion, he pitied the extravagant, pretending, and poor pride of Southern Papists, and asked—(he was thinking of Pendergast-hall)—why could they not build solid, well-shaped, square, sensible houses, of comfortable-looking brick, three stories high ?

It has been said that O'Burke was the most downcast of the party; but he was not the most reserved. Since her few words of misunderstanding with Philip Walshe at Dunluce, Louise Danville scarce opened her lips to any of her companions, and she took little pains to hide the positive, and seemingly, unmeasured displeasure which settled upon her countenance: indeed, one of the remarkable characteristics of this young person was, the almost total want of the worldly experience which teaches to veil or suppress vehement feelings of any kind. Lady Dorcas had made many attempts to conciliate her, without alluding to the past, but ineffectually; her friend remained distant, silent, and all but uncivil. Philip Walshe himself appeared willing to make up the quarrel upon which was founded her unlovely mood. He rode at her side, leaving his sister in charge of Patrick, and even attempted some little sallies, and a renewal of the personal flattery which had marked his previous conversation with her; the one much opposed to his present real state of feeling, the other as unmeaning as they had ever been. But she reined up her jennet when

he too closely approached her, and paused for him to move forward; his witticisms did not extract a smile, and his silly compliments only caused her to shake her head, or to frown, or to assume a scoffing and bitter expression of mouth. Once or twice, indeed, tears, which she did not permit him to see, filled her down-cast eyes, or she flashed at him a still secret glance of mixed reproach, tenderness, and impatient indignation. Patrick occasionally caught some of this by-play, and wondered at the primitive strength of her character, as well as at the nature of the connexion existing between her and his friends. He was soon to see both more fully explained.

A month had passed over in Crana castle, and he had explored all the interesting walks and scenery lying immediately about it; silent valleys, watered each by its own little streamlet; the fragrant path along the side of the glassy river; trackless woods, shaded and tangled, like his own mind, and mournfully and yet sublimely echoing to the raven's croak, or the wild pigeon's coo; and more open realms of leafy solitude, where the partially whitened trunks of gigantic and aged beeches stood often

wide asunder, allowing glady views, up hill or down dell, still of trees and trees, with fresh spots of green grass between, to so great a distance, that sometimes the eye wavered over a vague, airy blue tint, in which stems and branches, and the medium-dimmed light of the dancing sun-beams, became one confused vision of shapes and colour. Here and there deer grazed, near him and far off, or rushed in a herd, upon some wayward impulse, down into the bottom of a thickly planted valley, or engaged each other in combat, making the lonely shades around ring to the martial clattering of their antlers.

But Patrick was not often, indeed seldom, alone during these rambles. His young host, or his sister, accompanied him, together or separately; and the latter was oftenest his companion. By her side, as she smiled, or laughed, or blushed at her own sparkling or fervid thoughts, he hourly nourished an absorbing passion. Even yet the unrestrained merriness of her manner, at their first meeting, had not come back to Lady Dorcas; but he scarce regretted its partial disappearance: indeed, he thought her of more worth and depth without

it. Perhaps he occasionally ventured to draw, from this change in her, conclusions most delightful. It was certain that Dorcas Walshe observed the great and pure devotion of his heart for her, and did not put forth, in words, looks, or actions, any intimations, direct or indirect, of her disapproval.

Meantime, Louise Danville never offered to join him or the mistress of Crana castle in their walks abroad. Books of a religious, and, at the same time, of a conventual description, or her needle, seemed to engross all her attention at home. In her present sulkiness, she appeared to make a kind of display of her industry and her little pious observances, and, at the same time, not to be in the least aware that much of all this was childish or mawkish, or more suited to command admiration in the inferior nunnery where she had spent the greater part of her life, than in the world of which she was now a member.

Indeed, chiefly owing, perhaps, to her neglected education, the precocious maturity of Louise Danville's heart was not more striking than the backwardness of her mind ; or, it might be better to say, that while Nature had ripened the

one, as in every situation Nature will do, the other had not been gaining observation and judgment sufficient to go hand-in-hand with Nature, to guide her growth, and lop her self-exhausting luxuriance. Louise was a woman in feeling, a child in common sense. She loved with intensity, with perfected strength; but she had never yet asked herself if her passion was misplaced, or even requited. Having weakly mistaken a few common-place speeches from a man of the world, as an acknowledged response to her love, she was ready to resent, as insult and outrage, any change in his manner towards her. Already she has been seen thus acting, to a certain extent. Most unfortunately for herself and all around her, she was capable of allowing her infatuation to overstep any limit.

The face and person, appearance and bearing of this child-woman, indicated her character. It has been said that she was of low stature, and very slight: it is added, that all who looked at her believed she had yet to grow taller and rounder, though such was scarcely the fact. And then, strongly marked as were her features, they gave no combined expression of

maturity, with all their ordinary gloom and reserve; and when impetuous passion blazed from her large black eyes, knitted her brow, and made her dark cheek pale, people wondered to see a child's face so strangely agitated. Her age was between fifteen and sixteen, but she did not seem within two years of it.

While she sat at home, as has been said, and while her friends otherwise engaged themselves, Philip Walshe did not renew with Patrick any conversation about his brother Roger. Except upon the few occasions when he forced himself to look cheerful, and speak lightsomely in his sister's presence, Patrick being by, he wandered much alone about his castle, or shut himself up in the old apartment, called the library. But his young visitor did not fail to observe, that towards night he always walked in view of the road to Crana, upon which, as it climbed over the hill, a traveller could be discerned at a good distance; and though out of respect to his present reserve, Patrick seemed to take no notice, he further suspected that more than once Philip Walshe had joined a horseman, who had come off that road, and conversed secretly with him. Nor did he find it difficult

to surmise who were those mysterious visitors, for he remembered Roger's promise to dispatch an express to Crana every day, after the lapse of a certain time.

Another of these couriers arrived. Patrick was walking with both his friends on the banks of the river when the rider appeared on the highest point of the hill-road. They all saw him, and observed upon him together. Lady Dorcas wondered who he was; Patrick, not willing to show any consciousness, supposed him to be some traveller, who had mistaken the road to Crana for the main road. Philip Walshe, in a forced laugh, said he was perhaps a Rapparee reconnoitring the castle for a night attack.

"He is not the first scout then," observed Dorcas; "I think I have noticed other strange horsemen come down that way lately of an evening."

"By yea and nay, and may be so, sister; and that's a good reason for looking after the present one," answered Philip, still endeavouring to wear a light manner; and he left her and Patrick alone, and bent his steps towards a secluded place in his domain, whence the hill-

road could still be viewed by him, although he no longer remained visible to them.

Their eyes continued fixed on the rider. He was now descending the road, slowly and watchfully. After a few moments he reined up, and seemed replying to a signal from some one below him, and then he spurred his horse, and, as he approached the level of Crana castle, was hid from view.

Dorcas sighed profoundly after his disappearance. Patrick, glancing at her, saw that tears started from her eyes. The understanding between them warranted an inquiry on his part as to the cause of her affliction; but he feared that it related to a subject upon which he must not speak with her, and, therefore, not seeming to notice her tears, he remained silent.

This policy did not, however, avail him much. Lady Dorcas, suddenly raising her head, and regarding him stedfastly, said—"Mr. O'Burke, do not *you* really know the mystery from which, and all knowledge of which, Philip Walshe so carefully excludes his only sister?"

Patrick could only temporize, by demanding, in turn, what she meant.

"Nay, answer me, Sir, more honestly—ex-

cuse the word—but I *am* afflicted. Has not Philip told *you*, at least—(note you—I wish no breach of confidence with him, if you are bound to hold the secret from *me*)—but has not Philip told upon what errand these dangerous-seeming men come here to visit him?”

Patrick could safely answer no; and he hastened to add that her brother and he had never exchanged a word on the subject, since their arrival at the castle of Crana.

“That is very strange,” she continued, “but it only heightens my dread of his peril in whatever hidden matter so much engages him; for perilous, truly, must the business be, which he will not impart to a single creature that he loves, or that loves him in return.”

Patrick hoped his friend might stand free of all dangerous secrecy, and he protested that he saw no grounds for Lady Dorcas’s sisterly alarm.

She shook her head. “Ah, Mr. O’Burke, I am not so quick to take up fanciful causes for alarm, nor so easily blinded when my reason embraces true ones. Philip has not been able to deceive me into the belief that his heart is at rest, ever since that moonlight adventure in

the old castle northward. Nor am I sure that the account he gave us of his own mysterious adventures, while parleying with the outlaw across the dark chasm, is the real and true account. He vehemently insisted, however, that I should receive it as such ; and my love for him, and indeed my duty to an only brother, who has stood me in the place of a father, and a kind one, oblige me to question him no closer. But, Mr. O'Burke, my mind has ever since been filled with fears and tremblings ; and these stolen visits of unknown and wild-looking men—ay, and other things—possess it with a strong though vague dread of some great misfortune to happen.—Heaven forgive *you*, Louise Danville, for hindering Philip and me, when he was beginning, in his first feelings, to tell me the naked truth !” pursued Lady Dorcas, much excited.

“ I pray you, dear Lady Dorcas, may I enquire what degree of relationship there is between you and your brother and that young gentlewoman,” asked Patrick, glad of what he thought was an opportunity to change the direct current of the conversation.

“ None, Sir, not a link,” replied Lady Dorcas ; “ and I am not afflicted that there is not,

although I once wished there might have been. I will own to you, Mr. O'Burke,—and do not too quickly call me fickle-minded upon the avowal—that I have loved Mistress Louise more than she will lately let me love her. And this must seem so strange to you, seeing the young lady one of our family, and having witnessed, I hope, our great interest in her, that, as my brother's much-esteemed friend, I deem I owe you further explanation.

“I first met Louise Danville when we were both mere children, in my convent in Spain. She was there, like myself, a class pupil. I liked her from the outset, and she seemed devoted to me, and still more won on me by a great, indeed an excessive zeal and attention. The people and the ways of the convent were new to me; she had been there since her infancy, and of course was well used to both; and when she found that her experience was of service to me, and that I was thankful for it, her whole leisure time seemed occupied with making me happy, and doing me kindnesses in a thousand little ways, the day long.

“As we began to grow out of mere childhood,—I first, for I was her elder by a few

years,—this extreme devotion to me did not seem so agreeable as it had been. I felt, though perhaps not distinctly, that it left neither of us enough independent of the other; that I could now dispense with much of it; and that she would appear as a more dignified friend, if she would of herself permit me to do so. But she would not: nay, upon the strength of thus embarrassing me with a great many trifling favours which I did not want, it did appear now and then, that Louise, in her own immatured or immaturable judgment, supposed she had a right to play the mistress over me.

“As neither by nature nor temper I was in much danger of allowing her such a sway, I could not avoid disliking the attempts to establish it; and so our early, and often deeply-vowed friendship was likely to end in very little, when something happened to rivet it anew. The Superior of the house formally summoned her to an audience one day, and Louise returned to our little sitting-room in much sorrow. I could not long remain ignorant of the cause. Being deemed of an age to think for herself, the Superior had spoken with her of her prospects in life. Hitherto, Louise had never considered the subject. Her recollections did not

carry her beyond the convent gates; she knew of no other home—no other world: it was the world to her; she knew of no other friends but those she saw around her in it. Now she learned that she had no other; that her mother was dead, discarded by her family; her father—the poor desolate Louise burst into bitter tears—her father had abandoned her and her mother in early infancy; and she was a child of the convent—taken in for charity—and ever since brought up by the Superior.

“So wretched a tale as this, and her great affliction, her pouring tears, blotted out all her little faults, and all my little dislikes to them; and our friendship was renewed in a form more likely to last. I quitted the convent for the court; but not before I had promised that we should be companions during our lives; that I would come back for her whenever my brother should take me to Ireland, and that we should leave Spain together. Before entering into this serious engagement, however, I had obtained Philip’s consent to it; he had even passingly seen Louise, and observed nothing in her character or manners to make him disapprove of her as my constant fire-side friend.

“He saw her passingly, Mr. O’Burke, then,

when he came to escort me from the convent to the house of our noble friend and relation at court; and if he saw nothing in her unfitted for my confidence, neither did he see aught to stamp her image particularly on his mind. But *she* saw *him*, and although but as passingly, permitted him to make a very different impression upon her. I did not guess so at the time; such appears to have been the case, however. Philip has a gallant way, a French way, I believe, or half French and half Irish, of saying foolish things to almost every woman he meets—nay, woman, or girl, or growing girl, I believe, it is nearly all the same with him. Louise Danville, at their first short interview, was more girl than woman, and as much child as either; and (according to his fashion ever since he wore a beard, or even had hopes of one, as I am told) he addressed her laughingly and flatteringly, but still—for I noticed it—with the kind of easy, impudent condescension which men-fops, and especially well-looking ones, put on towards attractive women that are to be.

“Years rolled on. He settled his law disputes here—(oh, Mr. O’Burke, those law dis-

putes ! Heaven shield us against a fresh one ! and now you have part of my mind upon Philip's present mysterious conduct)—and he came for the last time to Spain, to take me back with him to dear Ireland. We returned to the convent for Louise Danville. She became our adopted sister ; she joined us almost instantly upon our homeward journey. Although she had advanced more towards a womanly age than when Philip first met her, his playful manner scarce changed towards her. Again he whispered mock speeches in her ear, and would take her hand, and—" Patrick saw the narrator blush, though it was nearly twilight—" and once, Mr. O'Burke, I saw him offer, without a repulse, a closer little freedom, though belike—though surely—an innocent one too. It seemed to me, however, that it was my duty to address both him and her apart, and to tell them I thought such pastime wrong. Philip, the graceless Philip, laughed at me, in course, and said some such words as ' Tut, the poor little convent novice ! what dreams she of sinning ? ' But the moment I spoke to Louise, her secret was shown plainly at once. I need not further hint what I mean, Mr. O'Burke.

If I mistake not, you have yourself guessed it, sometime since."

Patrick admitted that he had noticed in Mistress Louise's manner, symptoms of a passion too strong for disguise.

"Well, Mr. O'Burke, judge me then if I have not some cause for jealousy of my former friend. I do not agree with you, that her feelings are too strong for disguise. No, they are not; such feelings ought to be, and can be, restrained in the bosom of every woman; at least, from making the show of them which Louise Danville does. They ought most especially to be subdued, or well struggled with, whenever it is plain that they direct themselves to an unattainable object. And it is this which causes my lack of love in Louise's regard. Not only she is indifferent to a display of her sentiments, but she is not enough modest even to recollect that Philip of Crana is a flight above her. God knows, Mr. O'Burke, I do not here speak or think of any unfortunate circumstance of poor Louise Danville's parentage, that I may hold it up to uncharitable remark: I humbly hope I may escape the censure I should deserve, even from myself, for such want of feeling, by appealing to my conduct towards her. But when

it is so plain that the last and only representative of an ancient and noble family must form an alliance according to his birth—nay, when it is politic, needful, necessary, that the future mistress of Crana Castle shall add, by her friends, to its safety, in these times of hatred against fellow Christians; ay, and redeem some of its best acres, placed in jeopardy by Philip's late losses at law;—when all this is so very plain, I own it does rouse my anger, to see poor Louise Danville selfishly throw out to my brother the temptation of an almost avowed preference—a temptation against which, I fear, few of his sex are at all moments proof.”

“Perhaps, owing to her inexperience, she does not weigh the matter as you do?” observed Patrick: “perhaps, in fact, she does not see it in the same view, therefore cannot weigh it at all.”

“She ought to have so seen it long ago, Sir; for I will not hide from you that—without particular mention of her feelings for Philip—I have often hinted to her how he ought to wive, according to all natural course of things.”

“And how did she receive your opinions, Lady Dorcas?” asked Patrick.

“As a wayward child does any advice for its

good: and yet with a vehemence of self-will which makes me alarmed at the probability of her passion breaking out in disappointment," answered Lady Dorcas; "in fact, Mr. O'Burke, knowing my ideas on the subject, she has lately resented them so far as to refuse to converse with me, and once or twice I have detected her fixing upon my face looks of any thing but good-will. So that, Sir, along with Philip's concealed whisperings here, with the men who visit us every evening, Louise Danville—her presence in our house—as a member of our family—begins to make me very unhappy."

"Her requital for your kindness to her cannot be called grateful, of a certainty," said Patrick.

"Let that pass; her own heart may judge the question. But, in truth, Mr. O'Burke, the idea has seized upon my mind, that Louise Danville is doomed to aid others—whoever they are—and whatever they purpose—in working harm,—perhaps ruin, to the last of the Walshes of Crana."

Lady Dorcas's voice broke as she uttered these words; and Patrick, observing that she

was much agitated, strove all he could to remove from his fair friend's imagination the dispiriting prepossessions which filled it. Nothing, he insisted, could seem more improbable than that danger or mischance, in any shape, menaced her family—except it might be, indeed, the supposition that Mistress Louise was to prove herself one of the agents in bringing about an event of the kind.

“I cannot argue with you, Mr. O’Burke,” resumed Lady Dorcas: “but are there not true impressions which lie too deep for the demonstration of your schools?—I am not singular,” she added, in a low and fear-imparting voice, “in pronouncing Louise Danville an ill-starred visitor for Crana.”

“Your brother is also of your opinion?” demanded Patrick, in some surprise.

“No, no,” answered his companion, shaking her head—“would to Heaven he were!”

“And may I inquire, who, then?”

“Oh, you are a man, and of course, a sage, Mr. O’Burke, and will make little of my authority; for it rests on the word of only a poor, unlettered woman, and an old one too.”

Patrick, eagerly declaring how disinclined he

was to treat lightly any person or any thing which Lady Dorcas considered in a serious light, begged of her to continue.

“There is an old follower of our family, Mr. O’Burke, who has nursed my mother, ay, and her mother before her, I believe, and she lives in a little hut on the other side of the wood, passing her last years in peaceful preparation for another world. Her reputation for wisdom was a proverb at Crana, before I was born. I remember, in my early infancy, to have heard my dear mother (Heaven rest her soul!) speak gravely and respectfully of the gifts of Jane Heffernan, and no servant or relation of the house but will be your warrant, that Jane has given warning, in some concealed hint or other, of every misfortune which befel the family for three generations.”

“Well,” said Patrick,—upon whom, “man and sage” as he was, this character of the old prophetess made an impression—“is she alive still?”

“She came up to the castle and spoke with me a few days after our coming from the North, Mr. O’Burke,” replied Lady Dorcas, “and so I arrive at the point of information

you require. Louise Danville was at work with her needle in the window-recess when Jane, bent double, tottered on her gold-headed cane into the room to me; and no sooner had she seated herself, and fixed her glossy grey eyes on that young gentlewoman, than she leaned over towards me, made a signal that I should incline my ears to her lips, and whispered,—“Send her out of the ould place, *ma graw bawn*—she brings no luck into it.”

This anecdote affected Patrick in two ways, each almost opposed to the other. His surprise was in the first instance called up by detecting in Lady Dorcas’s character so distinct an acquiescence in the popular beliefs of the time: recollecting the primitive education she had received abroad, immediately after quitting the nursery of Crana castle, he forgave her, however. And next, extraordinary as it may seem, he began himself to bestow some attention upon Jane Heffernan’s implied augury. In truth, although he would have been far from committing his wisdom so decidedly as Lady Dorcas had done her’s, in support of any case of supernatural influence, he was not quite free of misgivings which then possessed the bosoms,

and presided over the legislation of the greatest men in England and Ireland. It is not meant to be insinuated that Jane Heffernan was a witch, or had ever made use of her "gifts," so as to expose herself to the charge of being one; but for the purposes of illustration merely, it is added, that many years after the time here spoken of, women were tried for witchcraft, in the most considerable towns in Patrick's country, by judges and juries too, of the mode of worship called least superstitious.

"Did you not ask the old woman to be more explicit?" he demanded, after a pause.

"I did, Sir; but her only answer on that particular head, was—'she is not lucky, *ma-vourneen*.' Soon after, however, old Jane asked me a question," continued Lady Dorcas, in the very cadence of sad foreboding.

From her previous words, Patrick concluded the question could not have been an alarming one.

"Judge," answered Lady Dorcas—"this was it—'An' hav'n't you heard the Banshee of the Cranas ever since ye came home to us?'"

"Your arm, I pray you, Lady Dorcas—the honour of your arm—" interrupted Patrick,

glancing into the interior of the wood upon which, for some time, they had been standing.

“Willingly, and let us speed homeward,” she replied, accepting his support—“the same figure caught my notice among the trees.”

“I saw but a man—a stranger though,” said Patrick, “and strangely appointed here—armed.”

“It was the same—” she rejoined: “to the castle.”

CHAPTER XXI.

IN one of the round towers of the castle, Lady Dorcas had fitted up a little sitting-apartment, sacred to herself whenever she chose to be alone, yet it was more generally frequented, with her permission, by Louise Danville, her brother, and his visitor, than were the spacious state-rooms in the body of the building. Here she had her books, her birds, her music, her flowers; from the window the prospect abroad was extensive and select; and the pleasantest evenings known in Crana castle, since the arrival of its young occupants, had been spent in the deep recess of that window, while the red harvest sun went down behind the distant mountains.

To it the eyes of Lady Dorcas and Patrick now turned on their hasty walk homeward, in

anticipation of the hour of tranquil enjoyment, which both hoped they should yet experience at its casement, before the usual time for repose. It was open, and a young moon struck brilliantly into it, showing the heads and shoulders of two figures, seated a little way within. "Who can they be?" wondered Lady Dorcas. She increased her speed, and soon recognized her brother and Louise Danville, although their backs were turned to the window, and but so little of their persons visible. Another glance told her that Philip's arm was round his young companion's neck, and that Louise did not seem dissatisfied with his freedom: on the contrary, that she inclined her head so as almost to lean it upon his shoulder.

Lady Dorcas and Patrick stood still. Philip's voice reached them, though not his words: his accents sounded gaily and sportively. Soon after, they heard low and broken sounds from Louise, which he interrupted again in all but a bantering tone. Her voice rose higher; she appeared to appeal to him in great emotion; he laughed good-humouredly: she started up, flinging away his arm; he also arose, and both disappeared into the interior of the room.

Lady Dorcas and Patrick were soon in the little *boudoir*. Louise Danville did not appear ; but Philip was half kneeling at a door, which led into an inner chamber, and, between fits of laughter, entreating her, in mock supplication, to come out to him. The real matter of the previous conversation between them, of which Lady Dorcas and her confidant had witnessed but a part of the dumb show, will here be necessary.

After her friends had that evening gone out to walk, Louise Danville, as usual, refusing to accompany them, sat alone at her elaborate embroidery. Her bosom had never been so ill at rest. Day by day, Philip Walshe's indifference to her became more manifest ; her own love for him more uncontrollable, and her childish yet fierce sense of disappointment, more violent. Lady Dorcas's disguised hints as to the alliance Philip ought to make, had also sunk deep into her fretting heart. Of these hints, Lady Dorcas herself has already spoken to a certain extent. She omitted to inform Patrick, however, of one, and by far the most important one, which she had ventured to give to her love-sick friend ; namely, that a family of great consideration, in an adjoining county, were disposed to admit his attentions to their

beautiful, accomplished, and wealthy daughter. And, perhaps, the reason why Lady Dorcas left Patrick ignorant on this point was, that in intimating a contemplated marriage to Louise, she had gone somewhat beyond facts, for the purpose of warning that young person against the indulgence of her feelings.

There was an additional source of the wellings of bitterness within Louise Danville's soul. With the quickness of a woman's eye, she saw that Lady Dorcas, while thus indirectly opposing her life's hopes, was herself yielding up her heart to Patrick O'Burke, and worse—was beloved by him to an excess of devotion. And that Philip of Crana's sister—her lecturer—a very screech-owl of bad omen in her ears—perhaps the bar between her hopes and their accomplishment—that she should experience all the happiness of love returned, nay, overpaid, while Louise Danville sat down neglected, forsaken,—(for so she imagined herself to be)—wronged, and despised—this was a stinging thought to the vehement convent girl, and it goaded and smarted her, until she said in her heart, after glancing at some glow of satisfaction in Dorcas's face, while they sat together—
“ I hate you !”

Stealthily, upon this evening, she watched Philip, Dorcas, and Patrick, go out upon their ramble, and all the feelings attributed to her worked as she gazed after them along the sunny patch which led to the nearest wood: Evil impulses to revenge for the supposed injury inflicted on her, had before now darted through her mind. At present, she allowed them more than usual scope. "Yes," she muttered, "clenching her little hand, and holding it up in threat, "Do—do go away from Crana, to kneel down with your false speeches before another lady,—do—do forget and forswear your words and looks to me,—do leave me, for my whole life long, a thing that *she* may point the finger at." A sudden burst of passionate tears interrupted the oath of vengeance she was about to make; she wept and sobbed convulsively; she almost screamed; and leaning her arm against the recess of the window, and her head upon her arm, delivered herself up to the fit. And it was strange that throes of wild and wayward tenderness were now mixed up with her anger against Philip Walshe.

Some time elapsed, and she did not hear a

quick and joyous step coming up the winding stone-stairs of the tower. It was Philip, after conversing with his courier, and he was all impatience to say a few words of happy tidings to Patrick O'Burke, and to indulge, before his sister's face, the unaffected good spirits which those tidings were his warrant for experiencing. He was sure that both must have returned before him to the castle.

He entered the apartment, calling out their names, in an echo of his former gay tones: and—"What?" he continued, "a-gadding abroad yet? becoming sworn 'minions of the moon?' I suspected as much, and so, even let them—ah! my own little passion!" Philip went on, seeing Louise in the window-recess—"And what do you, moping here, at home, and others so gleeish in the fair moonlight?—or I either? Come! shall we have a race together along the wood-path?—What say you?—Angry with me, and will not answer?" He approached close to her. "No, not angry, but worse, I see—crying—and why, dear Louise?" taking her hand. "Are you not happy among us?—what frets you?—Only tell Philip Walshe what, and he will visit fairy land, where you

ought to be queen, or get a charm to make you smile."

She allowed him to take and retain her hand, but did not raise her head, nor speak to him. She continued to weep, but her tears were softer than those she had been shedding. He resumed.

"Nay, my dainty Louise, this is wormwood to poor me. Since you will not give me your mind to-night, forget the cause of your grief until to-morrow, whatever it is. I want to be very happy for a few hours to come; and since you refuse the moonlight out of doors, let me seat you in it here at the window." She allowed him to lead her to a stool and sit by her side.

"There now—and now let us do the infectious light due honour, and be what all ought to be, who court it to shine on them—lovers;—lovers of poetical mood and spirit. Will you speech to me in rhyme, if I so open with you?—but first, the action to the word"—he stole his arm round her drooping neck;—she was passive, because surprised into the joy of having him so near her—"And so—to begin,—but hold—I forget—you told me once you were too young

—or too little—no—too young to know how to make love speeches, either in prose or in rhyme, did you not?”

“That was some years ago,” she said.

“Ay?—yes—now that I remember, sure enough it was; and in the years that have since passed lies the difference—is it not so?”

“They have brought no difference to me.”

“Then you are still too—I know not what—but too something for it?”

“Perhaps—for *love-speeches*.”

“Oh! but not for *love-thoughts*. In good earnest, my little passion, and really, and indeed now, answer me—*Can* they come into your dear little head so soon?” The childish appearance, and, in every respect but one, the childish, mental manners of Louise had, indeed, to this hour, kept the indifferent and not very observant Philip from considering her capable of even comprehending the subject they spoke on. “I am curious in my studies of *Mistress Nature*,” he continued—“an humble philosopher in that way, if it please you; so, I pray you, my dear, enlighten me,—*can* they?”

“If you supposed they could not before now,

it was idle of you, at the least, to address me as if they could," she answered.

"What! to swear so often by the blue sky, and all in it, that I loved you to the death?"

"Yes; I mean such idle perjuries."

"Perjuries? no, on my soul, truths!"

Continuing to regard her as an irresponsible person in this discussion, he now supposed that his late absence of manner had hurt or offended her childish pride; that therefore she was afflicted; and that to relieve her, he had only to renew his former trifling, using language which, with an almost child, would but convey the soothing idea of being an object of interest to him.

"Truths, my Mab! Truths that I will uphold before the world!—and so, now be friends with me once again, and let it tell me what it never yet spoke out plain to me, the dainty dearee—let it whisper into my ear, that for the universe of true love I offer, it gives me one little nut-shell full in return: let it say so now; there; let it—" his voice grew really kind, for he wished to beguile her into good-humour, and he mumbled the last words with his lips touching her cheek. He was answered in a way he dreamed not of. Again the inexperienced and

self-blinding girl believed him serious and sincere, and thrown off her guard by the intoxicating happiness of her feelings, she said, in a low voice, but one that no child could feign, "As much love, and as great a love, as a woman ever gave, I give you in return."

Philip slightly started, and drew back his lips from her wet though burning cheek. His philosophy gained a new light. And his first thought was of the call loudly made upon him to undeceive and divert the feelings to which he had given rise in the bosom of his poor little playmate. Yet, according to his nature and character, he allowed himself to be amused the next instant at the ridiculous part he was enacting; and in a mixture of both those humours, he went on, almost instantly after her impassioned avowal—"To be sure, to be sure, my empress of tiny beauties, great in extent and in kind must be the love you have for me; and even so great are my thanks; ay, and my faithful wish to reward it with a life of humble services: as thus—to make a scheme. Hitherto you have led but a triste time of it in this old castle; indeed, I have been sad myself since our arrival from far North."

“ I know it,” she observed.

“ But, my passion, merrier days are in store for us : I see it will soon be a race between Dorcas and me, which shall first reach the marrying-post ; and, no matter which—then shall the old walks blaze, and the old rafters ring, and you be the crowned queen of all our revellings and pleasures ; none other will Dorcas choose for her chief bride’s-maid, I am sure ; and none other shall Philip Walshe’s lady choose either, if he have words or wit to guide her choice ; and so—”

“ What do you speak of, now ?” she interrupted : “ brides’-maids and brides ? who ? how ?”

“ My fay-love so innocent, indeed ? Heaven help it then, it shall hear the riddle read ; thus—”

“ I read it without help, at a question,” she resumed ; “ Whom mean you to be first bride’s-maid at your coming wedding ?”

“ Why, have I not spoken the speech plainly ?—you, child.”

“ Villain !” and with this word she started from his side, flinging away his arm, walked rapidly across the room, entered the inner

chamber, furiously shut out the door, and bolted it.

“ Well,” soliloquized Philip Walshe ; “ I am a most beflattered gallant in this matter, of a certainty ;” and yielding to the sense of the absurd, which was a foremost trait in his character, he laughed heartily, approached the door she had made fast, knelt at it, and in this situation was found by his sister and his friend, speaking in through the key-hole.

A few words to Lady Dorcas explained how matters stood between him and Louise, and he laughed again, and was now joined in his mirth by his sister, loud enough to be heard in the next chamber,—at least, Dorcas wished that such might be the case.

“ Go, Dorcas, and beseech her forth to us,” continued Philip, in a whisper ; “ ’tis a pettish, irrational little body, but must meet nothing but kindness from us still.”

“ I know it,” answered his sister ; “ and, except in this one whim, God sees I wish to be a real sister to her—” and she advanced to the door.

“ O’Burke, fair news,” resumed Philip, taking Patrick aside and shaking his hand—

“Poor Roger!—” his voice and his smiles together failed him.

“Is at large?” demanded Patrick.

“He is, lad—and we shall see him to-night in the castle; at present, he lingers not far off, and as soon as the night grows quieter, and that people are out of the way, old Rory will steal him in to us.”

Patrick returned the joyous pressure of Philip’s hand, and was going to mention having seen an armed stranger in the wood, when they were interrupted.

Lady Dorcas had begun to address Louise Danville through the closed door in a very gentle and conciliating tone of voice, but received no answer. Presently, while her brother and O’Burke spoke aside, her words and accents became more earnest; and at length, slightly yielding to impatience, she said—
“Unbolt the door, I entreat you, child, and sit down among us, like a person of sense.”

She was instantly obeyed. The bolt shot back, the door flew open, and Louise stepped out.

“Child!—and you too, Lady Dorcas Walshe, have caught up his insulting word? caught up!—

have you not taught him to speak it of me!—have you not? ye can laugh together, too, at the poor, friendless convent girl?—meanwhile, that the Lady Dorcas herself is woman complete, to waste hours of moonlight in the wood with her own dear friend?”

“ Louise !” remonstrated Lady Dorcas, in great confusion, as she offered to take her hand,—“ have a care, have a care.”

“ Have a care, you, Mademoiselle !” retorted Louise, retiring from her—“ and you also, Philip Walshe, have a care !—Between ye both, I stand outraged and taunted to-night—here, in your strange land—here, in your house—decoyed from my peaceful convent, and dragged with ye through the cold world, only to be so treated !”

“ Dear Louise !” pleaded Philip.

“ Silence, Sir !” she exclaimed, stamping her small foot—“ Dare not to insult me once again by the language that has deceived me !—the language that has broken my heart—” she was about to yield to tears, but her frenzy blazed out anew before one single tear could damp it—“ the language that has made me mad !—ay, Dorcas Walshe—ay, Philip Walshe, have a care !—

Philip Walshe, though I call you no Baron of Crana!"—she almost ran, passed them, left the apartment, and rapidly descended the stairs of the tower.

Philip looked expressively at O'Burke, now not in a mood to renew his laughter at the extravagance of the infatuated Louise: her last words shot coldly to his heart. Lady Dorcas gazed from one to another of the friends: she also had caught those words. All remained silent for some time. Philip broke the disagreeable pause.

"Well, I can but say I am a dangerous fellow to trust in women's company any age from twelve to sixty, at the least—" endeavouring to resume his gaiety; "I must needs forget all my conquests now, however, for an hour or so, to sit down in the old library and pen a letter of business—so, good b'ye, sister, but not for the night, if possible," and he left the boudoir as suddenly as Louise had done.

"Now, Mr. O'Burke," said Lady Dorcas, sitting down in the window-recess, "you will perhaps give some thought to my forebodings of evil to us all from Louise Danville."

“You allude to what she said at parting,” answered Patrick; “it was indeed a strange speech, yet surely as wild and unmeaning as strange.”

“God grant it!” resumed Lady Dorcas, her accents scarce audible, while she seemed to shudder. Of a sudden she started, crying “Hist!” and bent her head in a listening attitude. “It was from the great wood it came,” she resumed, addressing Patrick.

“What?” he asked, observing that her cheeks were very pale in the moonshine, and her eyes glittering with excitement. “What?” he asked a second time, in a whisper.

“That low wailing,” she replied.

“I heard it not; and surely there was no such thing,” he said. “Come, Lady Dorcas, let us leave this solitary chamber, and repair to the more frequented part of the castle, where we shall find cheerful lights and faces; the place and the hour have an effect on your spirits. Come, allow me to lead you down.”

“You remember old Jane’s question to me?” inquired Lady Dorcas, not seeming to have heard him; “the question I told you of abroad in the grounds this evening, when we were in-

interrupted, and could speak no farther? You do—I see it in your looks. Well, I answered her; and doubtless, in your wisdom, you will smile to hear how. Do so, if it please you; only remember that my word of truth is at stake.”

“And you answered—yes?” demanded Patrick.

“I did—I answered yes; for three times that I had heard the warning spirit of our family; and for twice that I had *seen*, as well as heard.”

Patrick O’Burke drew back in his seat, and uttered, below his breath, an ejaculation of surprise and awe; for whether or no Lady Dorcas laboured under a delusion, there could be no question of the deep sincerity of her conviction that she did not.

“First, O’Burke, about three days after we arrived in the castle, I could not sleep one night for the lament of the Banshee; it came sometimes to the windows of my chamber; sometimes it sunk low into the court-yard; sometimes it mounted over the roof; and the voice was so full of grief, of utter heart-breaking grief, as it were, that its cadences, as well

as my thought of the coming woe it foretold, made me weep and sob in my bed."

"It was a stormy night?" asked Patrick.

"It was as mild a night as ever reigned in the heavens. You are incredulous, O'Burke; but you need not be. Nothing is better known of our family than that it has had its Banshee since the days of its founder, always giving notice of approaching misfortune—death, or persecution, or poverty, as Heaven might have willed. Look out with me from this window—look across all the hills and valleys near to us, and rest your eye upon the top of that distant, rocky mountain, which is barely visible—a shade and a line against the moon-lit sky. In former times, that mountain was ours, and the estate of the Walshes ran from their castle—ay, and from far behind their castle—to its opposite base; and upon its craggy and lone-some summit, where a human foot never sounded, there the Banshee had her bed."

"'Tis a sweet fancy, if not as true a story," remarked Patrick; "and a like story, be it true or false, was told me in my boyhood of a *Banshee* of my own family; but a poet of my father's acquaintance would have our attendant

spirit a politician merely, only bewailing our national misfortunes in her distant bed, and finally bidding adieu to sorrow of every kind, at the prospect (miscalculated, however, Ban-shee, though it was) of good luck to Ireland before the breaking out of the last Civil wars. I quote the meaning of the song the poet made."

"I know the song," said Lady Dorcas; "judge if I do." She took up a guitar, and touching it, sang the following words to a slow moaning air :—

" Oh, my bed,
 At the head
 Of the water none have found ;
 Where it wells,
 Mid the swells
 Of the hill-top's broken ground !
 For a time,
 And a time,
 And through changes of the clime,
 There I 've lain,
 To complain,
 And wail and weep the fall
 Of the mighty and the grand,
 Of Erin's widow'd land,
 Who, when gone,
 Left not one,
 On her name aloud to call.

Oh, my wail
Did prevail
O'er the world—old silence there,
Till no bird
Near me stirr'd,
To scream to it in the air—
Till the dun rocks wore to gray,
And the wild shrubs wore away,
And I thought
'Twas my lot,
Still bewailing her to stay
Until the end of all ;
Because ever since her fall
None would shout
Her name out,
And let me hear the call !

Oh, at last,
On the blast,
From the plains of men below,
It has come,
To make dumb
My long, long voice of woe—
That echo of old fame !
That shout for her old name !
And at last,
For the past,
I may hush my grief and shame ;
And, as my gray rocks mute,
Watch my waters as they shoot
Through the cleft,
Open left,
From the old tree's crumbled root."

“Thanks,” said Patrick, “for an old ditty, which awakens many of the bitter-sweet recollections of childhood and boyhood;” and he was glad to believe that the mention of the song, and her singing it, had helped to chase away the sad fancies, or realities, of which she had been speaking. He mistook, however; for after a short and thoughtful pause, she resumed abruptly, though her tones were still low.

“The next night that I heard it, O’Burke, and it was about a week afterwards, I arose, dressed myself, and, strengthened by a strange curiosity, listened until the Banshee’s cries came close to my window. Then I quickly pulled aside the shutters and saw her face—if face I may call it—disappearing from the glass in the darkness.”

“Could they have been less unearthly features?” still questioned Patrick.

“My chamber is a tall tree’s height from the ground,” she answered. “And after that, the voice was silent for the night; nor did I again hear or see the Banshee till the very last night.”

“Last night, Lady Dorcas?”

“You shall hear. I had not lain down to repose, but sat reading. Her lament arose at

a distance, in the direction of the great wood, and came nearer and nearer by degrees, till, as before, it gained my window. Again I moved to open the shutters; at my first step, it ascended upwards, and rested at the top story of the castle. I left my chamber, mounted to the uninhabited one over it, and boldly challenged the spirit, whose face, and part of whose form, half-covered with a scarlet cloak, or the seeming of such, appeared also there at an unclosed window. My hasty words were not spoken when it a second time withdrew, and its wail died away gradually in the quarter whence it had approached the castle. O'Burke, made desperate by my fears for the fate of my family and myself, I was soon after in the great wood. I was aware where the castle keys lay, and used them. You know the open spot in the wood, near its centre, which we once thought beautifully lonesome and fearful, in the reign of the moon. Ere I gained that place, I could see into it; and there, still lamenting and weeping her unearthly tears, there the Banshee sat, upon a shattered stump, winding up her long yellow hair, which streamed over her scarlet cloak in the full moonlight."

"Did the spirit wait for a repetition of your

challenge till you gained the opening?" asked Patrick, who recognized in Lady Dorcas's sketch of the Banshee the popular one which since childhood had invariably been impressed on his own mind.

"No. When I stood on the patch of grass, I was alone; nor in my hurried approach to it had I gained more than one or two imperfect glances of the Banshee from between the stems of the trees. And then, O'Burke, my courage, or whatever it was, failed me at finding myself out, unprotected, at such an hour of the night, in such a place, and I ran back wildly, I believe, to the castle; for I can remember little of gaining the portal, or of locking it and the other gates, or even of ascending to my chamber, until, in the glimmer of the morning, I found myself lying on my bed, and recovering, it must have been, from a fainting-fit."

"Or from a dream," was Patrick's reflection; and he was about to submit the probability to her consideration, when Rory Laherty's voice was heard, as he ascended the tower-stairs to the little boudoir.

The old man appeared before Dorcas and Patrick in remarkable agitation, even for him.

He at first called out for the Baron of Crana, as if to that individual in particular he wished to communicate the cause of his tremblings. O'Burke soon obtained his confidence, however; and now he began, very strangely, by saying that he had been sent to warn the Baron of Crana that his downfall, and the downfall of his name, was at hand.

“Sent!—by whom?” questioned Lady Dorcas.

He could not tell; he did not know; it all happened in an instant, out by the river-side; and the words, and the vision who spoke them, came and went like “the dash of the moon-shine under a cloudy night.”

Lady Dorcas had arisen; she sat down again in great emotion. Her late mood of mind, and the subject which had engaged it, helped to make this vague announcement almost terrible to her. Patrick pressed Rory to be more explicit; but either he could not, having already imparted his story as distinctly as its circumstances were stamped on his own comprehension, or else his impatience to speak with Philip Walshe would not allow him to collect his senses and arrange his words; for while yet exhorted to state what he meant, in a clearer

manner, the old man hurried down the stairs, crying out for "The Baron of Crana ! the last Baron of Crana !"

To understand the real cause of his alarm, Louise Danville shall be followed, after her sudden departure from the tower.

Her friends only supposed that she left them to vent her excessive passion in the solitude of her own chamber. From the door which led thither, however, she turned her quick steps, and issued through the portal of the castle, then through the embattled entrance in the ballium, and flitted towards the river-side—Heaven knows in what impulse to evil ! She had declared herself to have been made mad ; reason certainly had little sway over her present temper. To any one who should have met her at this moment, her face would have told the fury of her heart and the weakness of her mind, for no extreme of provocation warranted its vehement expression. Her eyes rolled ; her dark cheek was unearthly pale ; specks of foam were at the corners of her mouth ; her lips stood wide apart, and her teeth were set, and sometimes her under-jaw moved, grinding them together. And in a face so young, and even so

attractive, and thrown out by a heart enshrined in so slight a frame, such passion was peculiarly frightful.

Within sight of the river, broken sentences escaped her. "My back to you, accursed Crana!—the sole of my foot to your ground"—spurning it—"for the last time! Wherever I go, if ever I pass through this black night, or cross that shining water, the world is wide enough to afford me a corner, far, far away from your gates! Wide enough it is, too, and ready enough to let me plan my requital to them!" She now stood near the river's brink, upon a shelving bank, which hid much of the strand beneath her; and here she paused, stamping her heel in the crumbling soil, her hands clenched at her side, while she unconsciously gave vent to her rage, and to her unshaped threats of vengeance upon Philip of Crana.

A man's head rose above the bank on which she stood; it would seem that he had been sitting under its shadow. She knew him as soon as their eyes met, and was not startled; on the contrary, she clapped her hands together, and uttered a cry at once of recognition and satisfaction.

"I told you we should speak of the Dunluce matter again, fair mistress," said John Gernon.

"And is it to speak of it again you have broken the ropes I saw you tied in there, and have come hither to-night?" she asked.

"Not without such hopes am I here to-night," he replied; "although my direct business is to watch about the mouth of that hole over your head for the return to his nightly nest of an outlaw, whose capture, dead or alive, will bring something to my poke, in lieu of a gift of yours, mistress, that I was plundered of."

"Yes, yes; they cheated you—that makes you amends again;" and scarce knowing what she did, though in a vague feeling to conciliate the bravo, Louise flung him her purse; then she turned her head to glance at the place behind her of which he had spoken. The river-path was here narrowed by shelving rocks of considerable height, of which the bases almost touched the skirts of her robe as she stood. At about a third part of the distance up towards their summit, was a small fissure, barely wide enough to admit a man's body, though it

was known to open into a large cave, which in the first rage of the law against priests some years before, had been the hiding-place of a celebrated ecclesiastic, as well as the rendezvous of many of his scattered or disguised flock, to join him in weekly devotions; and thenceforward it had borne the name of Polhan-Aiffrin, or mass-cave.

"I see," resumed Louise Danville, speaking incoherently; "a brave sleeping-chamber the outlaw has chosen, and I wish you all success in surprising him asleep. You are a man of some power and weight, Sir," she continued, in a certain view, "to be entrusted with such an enterprise; and also to escape, as you needs must have done, the ropes and the menaces of the people in whose hands I last saw you?"

"Oh, mistress," replied Gernon, "they meant me little harm, although they thought it prudent to make a show of treating me as a prisoner to the faces of your excellent friends that night."

"My friends!" she repeated bitterly.

"Ah?" questioned John Gernon, laughing ironically; "you have found them out, then?"

"I have," she answered.

“As I told you,” he observed, “at Dunluce.”

“Ay, found them out, and more concerning them than they should like to know from my lips,” resumed Louise Danville.

“Or from mine, I warrant you—I guess what you mean, mistress.” He did, indeed, guess, though his guess was a very uncertain one.

“How is that, Sir?” she demanded.

“Tut!—when you stole tiptoe after Philip Walshe and Master Patrick O’Burke that time, outside the ruins we had all been standing in; and when you stooped behind the big stone to listen to their secret, do you think, mistress, that my eyes, or feet, or ears, either, were idle?”

“You overheard them then, as I did?”

“Every word.” In this answer John Ger-
non deliberately told a falsehood; but he as
deliberately pursued a long-cherished purpose—
one, indeed, laid up in his mind since the night
they spoke of. From having watched Louise
conceal herself behind the stone, whence Philip
Walshe caught a glimpse of her figure return-
ing to the ruins, he felt assured that she had
learned the particulars of the true cause of
the young Baron’s emotion: from having him-
self overheard Philip’s first suspicious words to

Lady Dorcas, he shrewdly concluded that the explanation afterwards given by the brother to the sister was mere fiction : from having marked the unguarded petulance of Louise Danville, and conjectured its cause, he soon measured her character ; and upon the weaknesses and hastiness of that character were built schemes which he now carried into effect, word by word, as she and he thus suddenly and strangely conversed together.

“ Ay, indeed ?” cried Louise, questioning, though little doubting, his last assertion,—
“ Then you know, as well as I do, who is the real living Baron of Crana ?” and she spoke in a tone and manner of exultation.

“ Huth !—to be sure I do !” he replied, with the assumed indifference of confidence. “ Listen, bachelors !” he whispered, stooping for an instant under the bank—then he resumed his speech to her : “ The living Roger Walshe, the elder brother of Philip, is the real, living Baron of Crana.”

“ He is !” assented the beguiled and miserable girl, the triumph of her voice increased.

“ Roger Walshe, lately calling himself Randal Oge O’Hagan !” continued Gernon,

encouraging her excitement, by using violent tones, like her own. Again she confirmed his statement.

“ And this you heard, fair mistress, told by Philip Walshe to Patrick O’Burke ?”

A third time Louise Danville was about to reply to Gernon, but found herself interrupted. A creature—so unlike a breathing human being in features, limbs, and attire, that his appearance imparted supernatural fear—stood on a ledge of rock under the Polh-an-Aiffrin, and in a hoarse whisper, broken by snatches of a weak scream, called on her by her name to be silent. This apparition was worn to skin and bone, and had upon his naked body only the shreds of something like a blanket ; his long grizzled hair and neglected beard fell down his shoulders, and disguised his mouth and cheeks ; his eyes were half-pursed up in relaxed wrinkles, and yet they gave out a glassy lustre in the moonlight.

“ Good even, Father James !” shouted Gernon ;—“ Caught at last, Sir !—stand !” and he presented a carabine. Father James it was. He had wandered from the North to the South, no one could conjecture how ; and here, as it

afterwards appeared, he had fixed his residence, among a people quite strangers to him, and even unacquainted with his hidden calling, only attracted by the celebrated cave which once had sheltered another outlaw priest. Whether before to-night he had been aware of his proximity to some of his old friends, it became impossible to learn.

In answer to Gernon's salutation and challenge, he ran along the ledge of rock, and then by the river-path, towards Crana castle, saying,—“ No, no ! no stand ! none for me now, till my voice is lifted up against your new treachery !”—and he escaped immediate capture ; and it was he who, during his wild flight, sent Rory Laherty to Philip Walshe with some imperfectly-delivered warning of the danger in which Louise Danville had placed the family of Crana.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER Rory Laherty's departure from the tower, Lady Dorcas and Patrick continued some time there together. The conversation between them finally took a particular turn, of which more will soon appear. They were interrupted by a message from Philip Walshe to Patrick, requesting his immediate company on pressing business.

Patrick found his host in the old library. "A dispatch for the O'Burke from Pendergast Hall," said Philip, as soon as he entered, pointing to a large and well-sealed letter which lay on the table: "its bearer, just arrived to us, has ridden hard; I pray you, Patrick, sink ceremony, and read it off-hand; for I have other matters to speak on when you are at leisure."

His friend accordingly opened the letter, and began to peruse it. Philip Walshe saw Patrick's features express much agitation: surprise first, and then some deeper feeling; the blood mounted to his cheeks, and moisture trembled on his eyelids.

"No bad news, I trust?" asked Philip.

"None for me, certainly," answered Patrick: "Do me the kindness to read the letter."

He gave it to Philip Walshe, retaining a folded parchment which it had enclosed. It was as follows, under the hand of Miles Pendergast:—

"MY DEAR SON,

"I have undergone great inquietude here in consequence of the late adventures which took place under my roof. Notwithstanding my well-known, and, I may say, well-proved loyalty during my whole life, men in authority about me, who fancy themselves still more loyal than I have ever been, applied the severities of the law to me immediately after your departure with your friends, and fined me largely, and even imprisoned me during one calendar month, on the charge of priest-hiding, and of aiding

and abetting in the rescue of an outlaw priest, and what not. I have but just regained my liberty. But while I was a prisoner, I made up my mind to dwell no longer at Pendergast Hall, nor indeed amongst those who, I believe, have treated me harshly, if not unjustly, to say nothing of ungenerously. And, upon this, I got my estate sold, and turned into sterling money, and the old house is already inhabited by the purchaser, and in a few hours I shall be on my way to see you, dear Patrick, God willing. Offer my friendly respects to the Baron of Crana and Lady Dorcas, and tell them I am a suitor for their hospitality, until I can advise and settle with you what were best for both of us to do in the present turn of fortune.

“For as much thought as I have yet been able to bestow on the matter, it seems to me that we should purchase lands with our ready money somewhere in the South of this country; and that I might live with you, at the least, until you marry, if not afterwards—(and I boast to myself of making shrewd guesses on that point, but will say no more till I can observe how you and the lady agree together, in her own house, after a month’s acquaintance.)

If you cannot enjoy peace, and the good-will of your neighbours, on account of your religion in the South, then, I reckon, we must needs think of settling in some foreign country ; although, in such a case, I should be the sufferer, for the want of a decorous practice of my own religion ; but we are to talk at large on the question.

“ Wherever we may be fated to buy our new acres, I will pay half the purchase-money ; in this letter you will find a deed, putting you in possession of the other half, which it may become necessary to advance. The whole is the produce of the sale of Pendergast Hall. The large sums which I had in Government securities I have settled on my brothers’ children ; so that, although they had been somewhat in need, they will henceforth have little to complain of against me, or little cause of jealousy towards my adopted son.

“ This letter, sent to apprise you of my coming to Crana castle, will be my herald for no more than some hours, I trust ; till when, regard me, my dear Patrick, as, in the heart, though not in blood,

“ Your loving father,

“ MILES PENDERGAST.”

“The name of an honest Protestant,” said Philip Walshe, as he ended the perusal of the letter; “and that is a vast admission from me, whom I now and then suspect of being a bigoted Papist.—Well, Patrick, and what is this about Dorcas?”

“You can best tell what it is *to be*,” answered O’Burke.

“Seriously?” demanded Philip.

“Seriously,” answered his friend.

“But my sister, surely, is to speak first?”

“Why, I believe I may venture to hint—” began Patrick modestly—

“That she has spoken already?” interrupted Philip.

“Or nearly so.”

“When, for Heaven’s sake?”

“About half an hour ago; and I did not thank you for sending one to cheat me of the opportunity of hearing her speak a little more, belike Philip—brother Philip—is it?”

“Why, I suppose so, O’Burke,” replied Philip, laughing lightly, although he grasped with all his strength the hand which was held out to him, and tears were starting to his eyes—“but I must needs say ’tis a hurried matter.”

“ We cannot help that,” said Patrick ; “ but now for another topic.”

“ Yes, yes,” replied his friend in a whisper ; “ he is to come in here to us. Rory Laherty has been on the watch for him since night-fall, and, as I half told you, is to steal in the poor fellow through the gates, and then through this secret door ;” he lifted up some tattered tapestry and showed one :—“ And O’Burke, I sent for you to be with me during our conversation, that you may assist us in devising what is best to do.”

“ But Rory Laherty abandoned his post of watch a while ago ?”

“ The old fool, he did, and came yelling and romancing to me here, with some story of a moonlight ghost, who would pass for a prophet ; but I drove back Rory with a laugh and a loud word, to take up his post again.”

“ The servants are not to see Roger ?”

“ No, no,” answered Philip Walshe, with a sudden sigh, as he drew in his under lip : “ although here, the poor wanderer is to eat and drink without their attendance ; ay, and sleep a night under the old roof.”

“ And Dorcas ? Must she still be excluded from our confidence ?” Patrick put this ques-

tion with the view of assuaging Dorcas's uneasiness on the score of her brother's late mysterious conduct towards her.

"I do not know—I cannot determine yet; much will depend upon our meeting with poor Roger," was Philip's answer.

"You expect to see him, soon?"

"Every moment, now."

There was a break in their conversation. Philip Walshe sighed quickly again, and the seriousness and anxiety which had been recently coming over his face, settled into its fixed expression. After casting his eyes some minutes on the floor, he glanced suddenly towards the door of the library; walked to it; assured himself it was secured; scrutinized the windows in like manner; stopped in the middle of the apartment, clasping his hands before him, and looked thoughtfully around; and then he went to a cupboard, took from it cold viands, wine, and glasses; laid them on the table; arranged the logs of wood which blazed on the large hearth; trimmed the lamp, and with another sigh, sank into a chair.

Patrick did not interrupt his reverie. It was, however, soon broken up. Two soft

knocks were heard at the private-door. He started from his seat, looking expressively into Patrick's face, and raising his finger, he trod lightly, on tiptoe, across the room; raised up the fragments of tapestry; touched a spring-bolt; and, as the brothers embraced, Patrick heard their sobs. They kissed each other's cheeks twice, and then, hand in hand, advanced to the fire; but not before Philip had whispered to the invisible Rory Laherty—"Watch still, and watch well!" and fastened the private door, and let the tapestry fall over it.

The Baron of Crana, Roger Walshe, wore a heavy horseman's cloak, but under it, the old regimentals in which Patrick had last seen him, when he was racing across the chasm at the castle of Dunluce; his great jack-boots, and the precise three-cocked hat, edged with tarnished gold-lace, like that on his long-skirted body-coat, which he carried in his hand, were also military. In fact, he was now habited in the identical uniform in which he had marched to bear his part in the battle of Hillsborough, and which, during his late profession, had often served him as one of his convenient disguises.

It was pitiable to note the self-undervaluing

air, and the expression of countenance, with which he entered—after having stealthily gained it—one of the rooms in the house of his fathers—in his own castle. Patrick O'Burke knew at a glance that he thought of having been long rendered unworthy of occupying it, by his misfortunes and his crimes. His step and carriage also had that want of freedom, and of being at home, which marks the entry of an humble man into an apartment above his rank in life; years of predatory shifting about, from one mean haunt to another, doubtless, had brought down his mind to this strangeness amid the mute memorials of his early youth.

With eyes wet from the meeting between him and his brother, he looked around him, smiling vaguely, until Philip Walshe directed his attention to the son of his old friend, Sir Redmond O'Burke. Roger, then fixing his eyes on Patrick, and still smiling, stopped short, and muttered inaudibly, and bowed—even not so spiritedly as Patrick had seen him do in his character of John Johnson. He did not offer his hand to his young acquaintance; and when pitying him, O'Burke stepped for-

ward cordially and extended his, Roger of Crana accepted the salutation with the embarrassment of an inferior.

“Your ride, dear Roger, has given you a mind for a poor supper with us,” said Philip.

“Ay, I thank you, Philip,” he answered, ungracefully occupying the chair which his brother drew to the fire for him.

“Hold! I make but an indifferent butler or pantry-man,” resumed Philip—“we want plates here,” and he went to the cupboard.

“And is it turning yourself into waiting-man upon me, you are, Phil, *ma-chree*?” asked Roger, smiling wretchedly, while fresh tears came to his eyes.

“And why not, Roger, dear, for lack of better?” demanded Philip, returning to the table, and laying a hand on his shoulder: “You are my mother’s eldest son,” he continued, in an impressive voice, “and more—let law-makers say what they will, the rightful lord of this castle, and my master in it.”

“Ah! that’s foolish talk,” was Roger’s only reply. They began to make their meal. He continued to be embarrassed even in the little actions and etiquette of the table. Patrick re-

flected how much he must have unlearned in every thing. Even the expressions of his face, so far as regarded indication of rank, were deficient: its colour and texture seemed vulgar; nay, his speech, and the very hoarse cadences of his voice, had necessarily acquired their present character, since his abandonment of his name and of his station in the world. Once or twice Patrick detected him eyeing askance his own family crest upon articles of plate which lay on the table.

The supper was drawing to a close. The brothers had spoken but little to each other, though, as they pledged healths across the table, their looks told much. Roger suddenly asked some questions.

“ You spoke of the mother a while ago, Philip;—she died while I was with Hamilton in the North; but you came home from your school in Spain a few days after I left her, did you not?”

“ I did, Roger,” answered Philip.

“ And, by course, you were here when she was called away from us?”

“ I was at her bed-side, brother.”

“ In what room of the castle did she die, Philip, dear?”

Philip mentioned the chamber by a familiar name.

“And ye buried her in the chapel, to be sure?” continued Roger. Philip assented.

“If it’s not very dangerous for us to do,” Roger resumed, after a short pause,—“that is, Philip, if you don’t think we might be seen together by any of the servants of your house, I’d be asking you, Phil, *ma-chree*, to take me to that bed-side, and then down to the ould chapel.”

The brothers had been looking away from each other. Now their eyes suddenly met, and at the same instant filled; and after struggling for a moment with his inward yearnings, Philip bent his head to the table, covered his face with his hands, and wept violently.

When the fit passed away, he arose without a word, opened the door of the apartment, stepped cautiously out, remained absent a short time, returned, took up the lamp from the table, beckoned to Roger, and they withdrew together.

“Poor Roger Walshe!” reflected Patrick, when thus left alone—“that one thought of his dead mother has annihilated all of his character, which is the growth of the time since they parted to this present hour.”

When Roger and Philip returned to Patrick, the former said—evidently taking up a subject which had been touched upon between them—

“The only thing, brother, which I am almost sure *she* will forgive me, is the hiding who and what I was as long as I could, after I was forced to return to my own country. But, indeed, from the day I learned that I had been outlawed in Meath, my thoughts only ran upon hiding my existence, while yet our father lived, also.”

“It was a noble thought, dear Roger,” said Philip; “that so you might continue a name and an estate to your family.”

“Tut, no, Philip; give me no extraordinary praise: I only said to myself—‘Since I am a beggar, by my own making, too, if not by my own fault, I will try and save from beggary my brother, my sister, and my name and theirs: since the laws disqualify me from being Baron of Crana, Philip and his issue after him, or else little Dorcas and hers, shall have the old place, and the old grounds, without legal taint; and thereupon I went to France, countenancing the story of my fall at Hillsborough, even to the face of all my family.’”

“ That was an excess of self-devotion, Roger ; our father surely, and myself, young as I was, and if we could have met, would have kept your secret for our own sakes, if not for yours.”

“ There was a chance that the honesty of family love might have betrayed us,” answered Roger, “ and I guarded against that, even though at the loss of family love for ever, or, at the least, for a long time. And now, Philip, dear, there is but one matter upon which I will try to crave your indulgence of my late unfortunate courses. I have said I was forced to return to Ireland, and it is true. And when I did return, it was not as a man of the hills and woods ; a wild, unsocial, outlawed man, with hands against all men and all men’s hands against me. No : I came the master of a little money ; a little, honest, honourable money ; and I took a farm, far North ; stocked it, and laid myself down to work it ; and, under a new name, was growing prosperous, in an humble sense, when, by an untoward chance, my hidden, though never-denied, religion, became discovered. Then I encountered unfriendliness, ill-neighbourhood, cold faces, finings, and at last imprisonment,

which lost me all my farming profits, made me unfriendly, in return, to law, and lawgivers, and law-upholders, and called up, I believe, a certain bold carelessness of mind in which I was born. It was an easy matter to change name again, and as easy to gain power over one of the roving bands of unsettled people who remain since the wars of James and his son-in-law ; and as a Rapparee I determined to die, however it might chance, without leaving a blot upon the name of old Crana ; and until this last turn, the thought I had treasured up for my death-pillow, was—‘The Walshes have it yet.’—Is little Dorcas in the country ?” he asked, after a pause.

“She is, Roger,” answered Philip ;—“But, you were compelled to leave France, you say ?”

“Not France,” he answered : “I was in Spain, and a sworn and paid subject of Spain, when the necessity for leaving it,—ay, and France, too, where I was too well known,—happened. I go on, Philip, telling you the very truth ; though I must needs end in a fact that, above all the passages of my ill-starred life, I fear will not make you love your brother.”

“ Upon my arrival in his territories, Louis gave me a commission in his armies, through interest made at St. Germain. Some short time after, I was permitted to change into the service of Spain. There I met a lady of a high family, and we loved each other—at least her high, and belike, fierce spirit, and my hot-blooded fancy would break through all bars to come together. Under my first-feigned name, I could make no pretensions to the approval of her family. We married privately, however, in Madrid—our marriage was discovered. Her friends renounced her, and commenced a persecution against me. They had influence at Court, and I was degraded from my rank in the Spanish armies. Burning with rage, I encountered one of them by chance. We fought a duel, and he fell. Then Spain became too hot for me, and France alas. I was necessitated to fly from an arrest which would have compassed my destruction; and, now listen, Philip—a few hours before my flight, my wife died, giving birth to a child—a daughter—and I could do no more than take the wretched infant and lay it at the gate of a convent.”

“ What convent, Roger?” asked Philip, sud-

denly excited by a matter distinct from the general feeling in which they had met to converse. His brother mentioned the name of the convent, and of its superior. "Powers above!" resumed Philip, crossing himself.

"What ails you, brother?" demanded Roger.

"Your child is in this house," was Philip's answer.

Quick words ensued, in which Roger learned the story of the wretched Louise Danville, and of her coming to Ireland with Dorcas Walshe. It certainly appeared, that in all probability she was the daughter of the Baron of Crana. Still there existed, or at least lay at hand, no positive proof of the fact; and ere she should be spoken with, or even seen, questions were to be weighed, and, as Philip Walshe strongly urged, his sister more closely catechised.

"Then little Dorcas, too, is in the house, as well as in the country?" rejoined Roger.

"Not little Dorcas now, Roger," answered Philip; "you have to embrace, for your sister, a lovely woman of good stature. I must seek her, and lead her hither."

Patrick pleaded to be allowed the office of summoning Dorcas; he thought that he could

prepare her for what she had to encounter more coolly, and therefore better than Philip could. Philip did not object; and Patrick was rising for the purpose, when his mission became futile. Almost simultaneously with terrific shrieks of more than one voice, sounding from about the distance of the entrance through the ballium into the outward court of the castle, Lady Dorcas was heard at the closed and locked door of the library, calling loudly and in agitation upon her brother Philip's name, and knocking for admission to him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER a moment of embarrassed thought, Philip Walshe went to the door, and asked his sister, without opening it, if she was alone. Dorcas replied that she was, and repeated her supplications for admission. As he turned the key in the lock, he demanded whether she knew the cause of the outcries which all heard. "No," she answered; "but I came to you for an explanation of them, and for your protection too, dear Philip, for I am sorely alarmed, and Louise Danville is not in the castle!"

He opened the door. She was stepping hastily in, when, at the sight of Roger Walshe, she drew back in alarm. Philip whispered a few words to her. She uttered a suppressed scream, and stepped back again, pressing her hands together before her, raising her shoulders,

and fixing her eyes on her new-found brother. Roger stood upright, at the other side of the room, his regards also dwelling on Dorcas; his cheeks pale, and a tremor running through his frame. When she did not immediately advance, he bent his head and body low, saluting her. This wretched self-prostration went to Dorcas's heart; she walked forward quickly, and in a sudden fit of tears, took both his hands in her's, and held her cheek to his lips. He, too, wept like a child.

The fearful cries rose higher outside the castle. Philip demanded Patrick's company to the top of the wall over the embattled entrance to the outward court-yard. Roger Walshe said he would accompany them, averring that he was sure the disturbance arose on his account, whatever it was; and that therefore he ought not to allow his brother, and his brother's friend, to inquire into its cause alone. Philip at first demurred, but finally yielded, as well to Dorcas's solicitations as to Roger's, on condition that the latter should keep himself as much as possible from observation, and take no part in any parley that might go forward.

By narrow steps of stone, they all soon mount-

ed the wall at one side of the gateway, Roger Walshe concealing himself from the notice of those below. The broad avenue to the castle swept from a great distance through the grounds up to the gateway. Green turf spread from its edges to the right and to the left. On this turf, immediately beneath the spectators upon the wall, was an old oak tree, of which the thick foliage cast a shadow over the grass, and at a first glance, many figures appeared in busy action, some within the shadow, some in the moonlight beyond its edge. The former were fastening one rope to Father James's arms, behind his back, and another rope round his neck; and from him, as he struggled with the matchless strength of a madman, arose in part the yells which had startled our friends in the castle. Louise Danville was the principal figure of the group in the moonlight; and her hands were held tight by two men, while she also writhed to get free, and echoed in the extreme of shrillness the cries of the priest. John Geron stood composedly near her, watching the proceedings under the tree. All of his bold bachelors were armed, and they were five in number.

Neither Patrick nor Philip Walshe recognized Father James ; this ignorance, however, could scarce lessen the consternation in which they beheld a being of such wretched appearance about to be strangled before their gate. The situation of Louise Danville farther surprised and alarmed her friends. Lady Dorcas added her own screams to the outcries below ; and Philip and Patrick, in a breath, called to Gernon to account for what they saw.

'The Captain of the Bachelors' company quietly turned up his head to the wall, and answered ; " All in good time : you shall soon learn our business so near your castle, genteels—just as soon as a rebel and outlaw, who will not submit to be led to justice, undergoes the punishment of his obstinacy. Up with you into the tree, Tom, and slip the rope over a branch—all else is tight enough now, and the money our own."

Lady Dorcas turned away from the sight, covering her face with her hands. Her friends were unarmed ; there was not a weapon in the castle ; to interrupt Gernon by force was therefore impossible ; and they could only continue to protest against the act, while the man whom

Gernon had addressed climbed up into the old oak, holding the end of the slackened rope between his teeth.

He disappeared amongst the thick foliage, his victim still struggling desperately, bound as he was, in the hands of the two other men.

“Quick, Tom,” resumed John Gernon; “down with you.” A sound of a human voice was heard in the tree, like a groan, interrupted by a catching of the breath, and Tom fell head foremost on the turf, and there lay without motion.

“What’s the matter, lad?” questioned Gernon: “jump on your legs! You can’t?—stunned by striking your foolish head against a oranch, I reckon, after letting your toe slip.—Up you, James,” to one of those who held Louise Danville, “I will help to take care of the lady.”

“Do not touch me, villain!” cried Louise, as he seized her wrist. “I have nothing to do with you, nor you with me—I have told you nothing—I will tell you nothing!” She had been silent since the appearance of her friends on the wall to this moment, her head dropped on her breast, and her efforts to get free abandoned.

“Do you hear her, bachelors?” asked Gernon, sneeringly; “she has told us nothing? and now she thinks, in her little fit of repentance, that we won’t be her humble servants along the road to the place where she will be made to tell it all over again?”

“From this hour my lips shall never utter a word, though you torture me to the death,” said Louise, in her late remorse, and, indeed, despair.

“And what can the young lady have told you, to warrant your present violence against her, scoundrel?” demanded Philip Walshe.

“Go on with that other business, James, and while it is a-doing I may as well amuse the grandees above on the wall,” said Gernon, to his newly-appointed executioner, who accordingly strode towards the tree; then he again spoke to our friends—“She has told me what you won’t half like to hear, Philip Walshe.”

“Sirrah! how do you address me?” pursued the alarmed and conscious Philip—“here, at my own gate, how do you address me?”

“I crave your pardon,” answered Gernon; “I forgot the mister. But, hut, tut, plain words at once. The little lady comes to this

gate—no longer your's, and that never has been your's—to put me in guard of the Castle of Crana, in the name of King William and Queen Mary, to whom it is confiscated, and has been many a year, by virtue of the outlawry of your elder brother Roger, in Meath—Roger Walshe, Baron of Crana, and late Sir Randal Oge O'Hagan.”

Once more screams of agony burst from Louise.

“ And you will hold possession of the castle for one hour after this notice at your peril, Mr. Philip Walshe,” added Gernon.—“ What's to do there again?” he continued, as, to the surprise of every spectator, the second man who had ascended the tree, while John Gernon was speaking, came crashing down through the boughs, and fell heavily upon his already prostrate comrade—“ Can't you try it again, no more than Tom?” He let go Louise Danville's hand, and stood over the person he now addressed—“ Can't you speak either?”

“ Barely,” gasped his faithful bachelor—“ I am stabbed in the breast.”

“ A volley into the tree!” ordered Gernon; and he fired his carabine, while his three re-

maining men managed to discharge a pistol each, two of them still holding Father James, and one Louise—"And now wait a minute," he said.

He had not to wait half a minute, when two hidden foes, badly wounded, and groaning loudly, fell in their turns at the roots of the oak, having vainly striven to cling to its boughs and branches in their descent: one was a servant of Crana castle, the other a peasant. Both held common table-knives in their hands.

"Any more of ye?" questioned Gernon, climbing up the tree himself, with the reckless and perfect bravery which was the only excellence of his character.

"Try, dearee!"—and—"Yish—an' plen-ties!"—the voices of John Sharpe and Rory Laherty were heard to exclaim, almost together, in the depths of the oak; the former rapidly added—"Drap yerselves on the lave o' em, my acorns!"—and a reserve of half a dozen servants and peasants jumped down upon the three bachelors, and secured without injuring them. Several new events now happened nearly at the same instant. Roger Walshe, giving no warning of his purpose to his brother, ran down the

steps of the wall, and unbarred and unlocked the gate, desperation and rage in his eyes; Miles Pendergast, attended by two riders, came, according to the promise of his letter, up the avenue; a great crashing and struggling took place in the tree, and then, forcing boughs, and even heavy branches with them, Gernon, Sharpe, and Laherty, fastened together, like three of a swarm of bees, tumbled in a lump on the green turf, and there lay struggling, and kicking, and imprecating in their several idioms and phrases. And it was even while they thus made their appearance, that Louise Danville learned the full operation of the act of ingratitude which she had committed.

She stood free of the man who had held her, stepped out alone and conspicuously before the wall, and spoke up to its top. "Philip Walshe, look—Dorcas Walshe, look—I have repaid all your friendship with treachery, which ruins you both—look, look!"—She held her long-treasured little poniard short, its point to her bosom. Her father had come out from the gate and was very near to her; he saw her preparations for self-murder, and wrested the weapon from her hand; then, holding her round

the waist with his left arm, he looked closely at it in the moonlight, and a great cry escaped him.

It was his own hands which had laid the unhappy Louise at the convent-gate. In his hurry and agitation, and in his anxiety to escape out of sight unknown, the small dagger had fallen from his girdle, and become hidden in the folds of the infant's dress. When found by the nuns, who took in the little stranger, the Superior kept it safe until the day of her conversation with Louise, of which Lady Dorcas has spoken; and then she presented it to her, as, most probably, a token by which she might, some time or other, discover her parents.

Louise's mind became seized with the belief that it must have been her father's; nor did she err in this one, at least, of her many vehement fancies.

After a few hasty words together, Roger Walshe and she turned out of view among some thickly-planted trees.

Almost immediately, Philip and Dorcas disappeared from the wall. The next moment brought the astonished and alarmed Miles Pendergast close to the oak-tree, where he saw his

former land-steward and gamekeeper rolling about with John Gernon, their allied efforts scarce enough to hinder him from overpowering and choking them both with his naked hands. Patrick O'Burke soon joined Pendergast, explained to him in a few words the scene which he witnessed, and then aided him in separating the only remaining combatants. One seized John Sharpe, another Rory Laherty, and Gernon bounced up a liberated man.

Pendergast's quick, just, and cautious mind, immediately understood the only course which was now to be adopted. He saw that, although John Gernon was temporarily mastered, for the second time, in the legal discharge of his legal duties, it would be but braving the vengeance of the whole statute-book, absolutely to send him away with a tale of defeat and failure to his principals. He therefore strove to conciliate the determined Mayor of Bull-ring, often hindered, however, by John Sharpe.

“ Ay, ye dearee, — Ay, ye mother's own reaving; and ye thought nae ane could form ae ambuscade but your ain sel'; ye thought ye could gae flaunting it in brave swords and carabines, over-an'-hether in the wood,

and never meet our ee; yes, ye did, Johnny; yes, pet; and gang up to the vera gate without ae challenge; to be sure; why not;” and thus Sharpe ran on, too much excited to heed, in the first instance, the severe expostulations of his old master. As for Rory Laherty, his immediate care, when he found he must no longer make battle against Gernon, was to run, whooping, to Father James, cut his bonds, and set him free; and, like an unbound wild beast in terror, the raging madman instantly fled out of sight, escaping the immediate fate which had threatened him. He was found dead and crippled up, however, a few days afterwards, in the Polh-an-Aiffrin.

But, still aided by Patrick O’Burke, Pendergast at last succeeded in keeping down John Sharpe’s bitter boasting and wrathful irony, that he might parley with Gernon. And he guaranteed to the guardian of bachelors,—made confident by a whisper from Patrick, as to the intentions of Philip Walshe,—that the Castle of Crana should be peaceably delivered up to King William and Queen Mary, without any farther legal process, provided that all who wished to depart from it were as peaceably per-

mitted to go their ways from its gates. Gernon, seeing himself outnumbered as he stood, and, in fact, calculating nothing so much as the pecuniary reward for his "discovery of an unsound title," assented to the proposed terms of treaty.

Philip Walshe now addressed Mr. Pendergast, issuing through the gateway, followed by his sister, both mounted. "I thank you, Sir," he said, "for saving me the trouble of settling this business; I have overheard your parley, and I am ready with Dorcas, here, to ride off from Crana this moment."

"Whither?" asked Pendergast, as he respectfully bowed to Dorcas Walshe, and shook Philip's hand warmly.

"I know not, faith," replied Philip, forcing a laugh—"any—the nearest road to the Irish coast, however, will serve.—The name of Walshe," he continued, in an altered voice, wringing Pendergast's hand—"the name of Walshe, Mr. Pendergast, is dead—and worse than dead—disgraced, in our own country, and we are not going to stay here behind it.—Good b'ye, Sir.—O'Burke, good b'ye."

"Tut," said Patrick, vaulting on a horse

held by one of the discarded servants of Crana—“We ride together, don’t we?”

“Yes,” answered Pendergast, “we do;” and he turned his own roadster to gain Dorcas’s side. Hitherto she had not wept at the prospect of loss of rank, country, means of existence; these words, and this action of Pendergast, caused her a fit of weeping.

“Where is *he*, O’Burke?” asked Philip.

“Here I am, Philip,” answered Roger, coming to his stirrup: he had stood some minutes behind them, and alone, hearing their conversation:—“And *she*—although worlds would not again drag her into your sight—or Lady Dorcas’s, is kneeling down in the clump of trees, beyond, praying your pity,—if not your pardon, before we part from ye, for ever—she, my own poor unfortunate child.”

“Part from us for ever?” demanded Philip—“surely we all gain the coast together—see—your horses, which I have ordered.

“Thanks, brother, kind thanks,” replied Roger; “and, with your leave, we will ride a little distance after ye, till danger of pursuit for the present may be thought past; but then, Philip, it is not in our minds, indeed, to live

with ye, or near ye, for the future. We know our own part, and will take it."

All remonstrance was lost on Roger. He only shook his head, and repeated his arrangements. "And we are not to *go by the name*," he added, "and for that reason, 'tis odds if ye shall ever be shamed with as much as hearing of us.—So, a good b'ye, brother; stoop the cheek, and let me kiss you."

They exchanged the salutation which he sued for. Then he looked wistfully at his sister. She beckoned him, when he came to her horse's side, let her arms fall on his shoulders, and presented him her lips.

"Brother," she murmured immediately after; "this new part you are so bent on taking alone in the wide world—" and she hesitated.

"Will bring you no farther shame, dear sister, by Him who hears me!" he dropped on his knees, weeping and embracing her feet.

"Well—we forgive the poor, blinded Louise," resumed Dorcas; "and we will kiss her for the last time, too."

"Yes, yes—our brother's daughter," agreed Philip;—"go for her Roger."

Roger did so, but returned to say that her remorse and shame would not permit her to appear before her uncle and aunt, although she humbly offered them her adieus, her thanks, and her contrition.

“ Ride, then—and good-night, Crana !” said Philip ; and he, Dorcas, Patrick, Pendergast, Rory Laherty, John Sharpe, and a band of volunteer servants and former tenants, who elected themselves into a guard against interruption on the nearest road to the coast, turned their horses’ heads from the old castle. The Last Baron of Crana and his ill-fated daughter followed, as Roger had stipulated, for a little way behind, but the two brothers never again met. All, however, escaped to a foreign country, where Philip soon gained a commission in an army of the enemies of his own, where Pendergast and Patrick purchased their new estate, and lived under the same roof, even after the latter was married—and married to Dorcas Walshe ; where John Sharpe, exclaiming against the barbarity of the language, and other peculiarities, had great sway as land-steward ; and where Rory Laherty, as game-keeper, was tyrannized over by him.



THE CONFORMISTS.

TALE II.



THE CONFORMISTS.

CHAPTER I.

OLD Irish people of the present day, who remember the things of their early youth, and can gossip intelligibly about them, wonder at nothing more than at the contrast between the mode of public travelling now, and what it used to be in Ireland some sixty or seventy years ago. While tottering, supported by their sticks, along the suburb roads of their native towns, they may be seen to hurry up a convenient green-lane, or, if that is not at hand, place their shoulders against the hedge or wall of the highway, in order to allow deferential scope to the career of the stage or mail-coach heard afar off,

but suspected to be close at their backs, in consequence of confused misgivings respecting the state of their own sense of hearing. In such situations as the latter, we have observed many an ancient friend, and while the stage whisked by them at the rate of nine English miles an hour, (making no more ado of four insides and twelve outsides, than if the horses were blasts of whirlwind, and itself and its tenants light clouds involved in their motion,) we fancied that, in the up-turned eyes and dropped jaws of the old gentlemen, might be perceived—mastering even their terror of being run over and ground into dust—an expression of awful amazement, as if the impetuous vehicle were some superhuman wonder, boding evil to mortals in its transit over the public roads of this earth.

And we have heard described by these grandsires of our minds, the more rational public conveyances which reflected credit on the different towns of their birth, when they (and who but they?) were of the young and adventurous of a growing world. “In them days,” it was thought no waste of time or want of energy in passengers, proprietors, horses, or carriage-machinery, if the ponderous diligence accomplished

a journey of sixty miles to or from the metropolis, in forty hours after its sedate departure from the starting-point. Nor did fool-hardy men then commit themselves to its guidance, sure (though slow) as it was, with the indifference and the want of previous arrangement for a long journey of sixty Irish miles, which is observed in a traveller of the present day, who, at an hour's notice, and having in charge only a small valise, or the paltry novelty called a bag, and contenting himself with nodding to his friends, and jokingly kissing his wife and children, consigns life and limb to the discretion of a slight stage-coach, an opposition coachman, and four incarnate devils of half blood horses. No; in those good old times, weeks were allotted to due preparation for such a journey, even by the diligence. Apprehending a lack of accommodation in houses of entertainment upon the road, perhaps a lack of houses of entertainment themselves, the prudent man victualled his capacious saddle-bags with a week's provisions, at the least, paid his debts, made his will, partook of religious comforts, and in various other ways nerved his manly mind for his perilous adventure. Days before

his departure, a tender gloom shaded his domestic circle ; upon the doomed morning itself, not only all the members of that circle, but a crowd of friends besides, escorted him to the side of the awful machine, and there tearful and boding embraces were interchanged. And, for present purposes it is convenient to add, upon the evening when he was expected—or rather hoped—back again, the same group proceeded miles outside the town, and took a position upon some convenient eminence, patiently watching for hours the approach of the moving house which contained among its inmates he who was most dear to them. “Upon the evening when he was *hoped* back again,” has been said ; for certainty in the case, or even that maturity of hope which amounts to expectation, was affected by no one, not even by the local half-proprietor who kept the sign of “the Cross Keys,” or haply of “the naked boy on the barrel,” in the main street of the town. His helpers, indeed, waiters and ostlers, and stable-boys of humbler degree, sometimes pretended to speak of a particular day, while he clothed his words in mystery ; but from their anxiety, equal to that of the friends of the poor travellers, and

often visible some evenings before the actual arrival of the public conveyance, it might be inferred that a laudable wish to support the credit of the mighty vehicle, rather than conscientious conviction, prompted their tongues to augur boldly.

In the reign of George the Second, upon a hill outside a town which boasted one of these public blessings, many persons were assembled as usual, hoping to catch along the distant road a sight of what was called, by excellence, the Fly Diligence. It was late of a summer's evening, but sufficient light still remained for their purposes. They had been assembled since before three o'clock, and had now strained their eyes abroad more than an hour, but without a promise of the expected object.

The group consisted of ostlers from "The Cross Keys" in the town, as well as of expectant friends of passengers, supposed to be contained in the Diligence. The former had confidently assured the latter that the object of the interest of both would surely arrive that evening; but, as often happened, these shuffling officials did not feel the certainty they fain would impart, and an observant eye might

detect doubt, and perhaps uneasiness, under their assumed tranquillity, or through their occasional gibe and jeer, and loud laughing among each other. In truth, although, until now, they had prudently kept their mind to themselves, the familiars of the Fly Diligence had reckoned upon the appearance of their esteemed machine the evening before; and its absence at present, long past the hour when, if to come at all, it ought to have been visible, made them really begin to fear the occurrence of some embarrassing event.

“The axle of her hind-wheels, poor crature, couldn’t give way again, Tim?” surmised one of the helpers, speaking in a whisper to his companions.

“Or her fore-wheel be slipping off again, Ned?” said another; “but that’s the last likely: Mat. Huck spent two good hours over it, after the last misfort’n, an’ I by his side. An’ never no one seen or hard him hammer away so since the day he was a smith.”

“Them late rains,” resumed Ned, “they’ll be softening the mud between nine-mile-house and Carra-gap afore this time, an’, maybe, she’s stuck in a convanient spot, boys.”

“ Or, maybe, brown Sal stretched a leg in the middle o’ the long stage this side o’ Kilkullen, like her cousin, Pol Blackberry, afore her, where there’s neither horse nor mare, for love or money, to harness in her stead,” remarked a third.

“ Or, maybe, she put it in the head of herself and her other three brethers and sisters to run off wid the poor Dilly,” said another ; and, notwithstanding their uncomfortable misgivings, a hearty laugh from all attested the impossibility of this witty supposition.

“ And how down in the mouth the poor sowls that’s waiting here along wid us, are biggennin’ to look !” resumed Tim, glancing towards the group who expected friends by the Diligence.

“ *Torney Doolly’s woman, above all,” concurred Ned ; “ but she needn’t ; there’s men in the world that wather won’t dround, nor fire burn, nor a tumble out of a worse Dilly than the mather’s, hurt or harum, in regard o’ the little han’ful o’ something that does be growin’ for ’em.”

“ You may say that, lad o’ wax ; but I won-

* Attorney.

der what brings Mithress D'Arcy here, the 'torney's ould an' early friend, when he was a bare-legged beggar's brat (an' no Protestan') in her house, an' her husband's?—who in the world can she 'spect home by the poor Dilly, wid her son Dan by her side?"

"By the powers o' Moll Kelly, I dunna, Tim; no one belongen to them went from this in the Dilly anyhow; maybe, it's one o' the daughters of her neighbour, ould Donaven, that she's lookin' for; an' the comely *colleen* 'ud be coming from Dublin town, unknownst to us all, the way she went, maybe."

"That can't be, Ned; we'd hear of her settin' out anyhow, an' we never did."

"An' so we would, faix; an' yet, how arnest she is lookin' over the road, and bould young Dan, too, by the elbow of her, doin' the same."

"She's a grand kind of a woman," continued Ned; "and had a right to be han'some in her day."

"An' not a bad heart, or a hard heart in the body of her either," agreed Tim; "for all she has that stand-off look, an' that stately way wid her, an' the black drop in her, into the bargain."

“ Marryin’ wid one o’ the good ould stock oiled the wheels of her heart, an’ made them turn so kind, lad ; though I wonder Hugh D’Arcy, that gave her such a brave bit of a boy to brag of, never coaxed the Protestan’ out of her at that same time.”

“ Mostha, so do I ; only it’s jist as great a wonder that *she* doesn’t try to coax young Dan to the church-dour wid her, sayin’ nothing of the boy, oulder nor him by a year or two, that they sent to foreign parts, for the larnin’ he couldn’t get at home, an’ the riches, too, we hear ;—but, neighbours, give an eye to the wife o’ the turncoat ’torney !—See ! there’s the second time she thought to make up to Madam D’Arcy, an’ put the *comether* on her, wid her *curtshee*, an’ her ‘God save ye kindly !’—an’ jist look how the widow o’ the ould * Roman grandee, (Protestan’ as she is her own sef,) sends her off wid one rise of her head, an’ one cast of her eye, to find Micky Doolins’s aq’ls among the people of all sorts that’s watchin’ the poor Fly along wid them.”

“ Ay, an’ watchin’ it for no use or purpose,

* Roman Catholic.

I'm afeard, at last, boys ; an' Madam D'Arcy seems of the same mind wid myself, an' so does young Dan, I'm thinkin'—yes, by the wit o' man, an' doesn't take it as kind as his mother either.—Hould, boys ! by the hokies, here they are on our backs, the two o' them ! an' now keep your faces, every Christhen o' ye, an' the best we can, for the honour o' the Dilly."

Mrs. D'Arcy and her son approached the group of helpers. The lady's appearance justified among themselves the homely criticism of the lords of the inn-yard. She was tall ; as stately as graceful in her mien and motions ; and her face, although beautiful, even to a statue-like degree of beauty, showed little of the gracious play of feature which wins the hearts of the vulgar ; yet it was very feminine, and, notwithstanding an expression of coldness to the general eye, very sweet withal. While she slowly advanced, the flapping of her vast hat, which reached but half-way down her lofty system, and the rustling of her stiff silk gown, open at front, over a rich quilted petticoat, well furred, and projecting, at her sides, only into an anticipated improvement of the emulative "bustle" of the present day, was awful

in the eyes and ears of the conscious minions of the Fly Diligence.

“Bould young Dan,” as they had called her son, also seemed to have been passingly well sketched in these few quaint words. He had not completed the legal years of manhood ; was not taller than his mother, and therefore of rather low stature for his sex ; but his breadth of shoulders and of breast, his muscular limbs, his measured and heavy tread, and his contracted brow, which did injustice to a large blue eye of naturally amiable expression, bespoke a manly strength and maturity of frame, and a firm, perhaps, wayward character. It may further be remarked that, although much elevated in exterior expression above vulgarity, he by no means gave as much of the notion of a gentleman as his mother did of that of a lady. In fact, there was a homely, unintellectual air about him. And if some particular cause had not this evening warped his features, young Dan D’Arcy prefers little claim to be called a gentle youth, by those, at least, who casually regard him.

It was obvious that he prepared himself to address the children of the Fly Diligence, and

in no very good humour either ; but his mother checked him by a pressure of her arm, and spoke instead. The lady temperately, but somewhat threateningly, demanded to know whether or not the public vehicle would, in truth and reality, arrive that evening ?

The helpers had been innocently stretching their necks, and straining their eyes, in the direction of the Dublin road, and now seemed as if their attention was unexpectedly called home by the question. They answered, one and all, though in different phrases, that nothing in the world could be, to their minds, more certain than the desired event. They requested Mrs. D'Arcy—"long life to her !"—to observe how very sure they must have been on the point, when, as she might easily perceive, Tim had brought out from the town a grease-horn for the wheels, in case of need,—the few last miles to the Cross Keys being none o' the best, and an accident or two having previously happened at the turn by "Bergin's corner ;" and when Ned had borrowed Mat. Huck's hammer and a few nails ; and Jem provided himself with the "biggest scrap" of a rope's-end he could lay hands on, "more betoken,

plenty of a good suggaun ; * ” and thus they were eloquently proceeding, partly in an earnest hope of deprecating the lady’s wrath, partly, as they had agreed, “ for the honour of the poor Fly,” and yet with an inward chuckle at the thought of hoaxing Mrs. D’Arcy, when she again interrupted them. All they had said, she observed, might well apply to their anticipations three hours ago ; but now, that the winter’s evening was fast falling, and the time long elapsed at which, during the short evenings, it was customary for their Diligence to come up, the lady, once for all, desired them to answer, yes or no, to her last question—Whether they would take upon themselves to advise her, and were willing to abide by the recommendation of exhorting her, delicate in health as they knew her to be, to expose herself any longer to the unwholesome night-air, in expectation of an occurrence which—she believed in her heart—could not now take place till the next evening ?

At this, the ingenious sycophants of the Fly Diligence looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders, or touched their caps, muttered un-

* Hay-rope.

intelligibly ; and, in fine, ventured to admit that, considering the uncertainty of human things, even when they seemed most likely of occurrence, it would be as well for Mrs. D'Arcy not to build much upon the appearance of "the Dilly," until, as she herself had hinted, the next evening ; and the men gave a good proof of their own dependence on the soundness of their minds in this matter, by scraping and bowing a good evening to her Honour, God bless her ! and to Masther Dan, and then proceeding to descend the post of vain observation.

At the same moment, Mrs. D'Arcy and her son moved homeward ; the latter growling angrily at the disappointment caused to their betters by the proprietors of such trumpery Diligences ; and the crying necessity there appeared to make the cheating knaves pay dearly for their imposition on the public. A Fly, forsooth !—"Yes," Daniel D'Arcy continued, uttering bitterly an old jest—"a fly moving over a plate of treacle." During his tirade, his mother spoke no word, either to soothe or inflame his mood ; she sighed, however, often, although faintly, as she leaned on his arm down the side of the steep eminence, and Dan soon

grew as silent as she was ; until, after a long pause, he asked, sighing abruptly and fervently in his turn—" but for all this, mother, will not Helen make Dora come down-stairs to us the night ?"

Mrs. D'Arcy replied mildly that she believed so ; and they hastened over the road to their house, which was but a few miles from the hill they had just left.

CHAPTER II.

THE next evening was very rainy and tempestuous, and Daniel D'Arcy came alone, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, once more to lie in wait for the arrival of the Diligence. But upon this occasion, neither he nor any of the other persons expecting friends from Dublin in it, had courage to brave the elements upon the hill outside the town, but rather repaired to the Cross-Keys inn, and were accommodated according to their social rank, or other considerations, with waiting-room in the private sitting apartment, in the kitchen, or traveller's apartment, or else in the porch before the entrance door of the caravansary : from each of which positions they could reconnoitre the street.

Mrs. Doolly, the wife of Attorney Doolly,

was one of the favoured few who, at the smiling invitation of Mr. Hutchinson, the landlord, had a place in the apartment of honour. Her husband, as has been hinted by the dependents upon the Fly Diligence, had conformed, many years before, to the superior ritual of which the innkeeper had always been a zealous observer; had attained, in consequence, to his profession as an attorney, and afterwards to much wealth and consideration in his native town; was a chief supporter of a convivial club which, twice a-week, did good to Mr. Hutchinson's establishment; and, for all these reasons, Mrs. Doolly had a right to a place in the best waiting-room in the house.

The ancient (though not present) family importance of Daniel D'Arcy, the fact of his mother being a Cromwellian, and, above all, young Dan's sway in the town upon fair-days, induced the landlord to ask him also, "reputed Papist" as he was, to participate in the indulgence accorded to the attorney's wife. And, as a mere matter of course, to which he felt himself entitled, the young man silently followed Mr. Hutchinson to the parlour-door, and was about to enter, when, seeing Mrs. Doolly seated

there before him, and about to salute him graciously, he drew back with undisguised repugnance, and an hauteur rather clumsily expressed, and muttering—"What! by the side of Micky Doolly's wife!" stamped back to the porch before the door, and leaning his shoulder against its extreme projection into the street, where the rain splashed him, there awaited, along with some of the humblest of his town-neighbours—(the wives, the daughters, the brothers, or the fathers of small shopkeepers)—the long hoped-for appearance of the vehicle which was deemed freighted with so much of interest and value to all assembled.

"'Pon *my* word!" said Mrs. Doolly, in ejaculation—"set us up, indeed!" looking to Mr. Hutchinson for encouragement in her expressions of ironical surprise, at the high airs of the younger son of a family, which was known to have lately suffered much amid the clash of politics.

"Mrs. Doolly," answered her friend's husband, seating himself by her side, while he drew in and firmly closed his lips, gravely knitted his brow, and bent his eyes on the floor—"you just see a sample of what the ould gran-

dees used to be over us, and what they would be again, if they dared—if they were let to go riding rough-shod through the country, with swords by their sides, and pistols in their belts, and to the mass every Sunday and Saint's-day, and to the school-house to get their pride puffed up with the larning and the Latin they used to throw at us, in the ould times."

"And so Micky says; an' it's I that b'lieve you, Misther Hutchisson, honey; avoch, yes! there's that very boy, now—sure no one could stand him, at all at all, if the school-masther was just let to turn his head entirely, along wid the poor family pride that's in it, of its own accord, an' the scornful snout that's on the face of him—*helatchy!** 'Micky Doolly, says he? an' so, that's the way they still think to spake of a gentleman attorney, an' a man of substance in the place?—my heavy hatred on 'em, an' all their likes!—if they go by the ould saying—'tisn't what you were, but what are you?—' who'd come off worse, I wonder?"

"Young Dan was ever an' always a hard-grained boy—that is, since he began to think himself a bit of a *manneen*;† but I never saw

* An ejaculation. † Little man—would-be man.

him so glum as he is this evening," remarked Mr. Hutchinson.

"An' what's the matter wid 'em all now, I wonder?" asked Mrs. Doolly — "maybe they're found out, agin, in some rebellus practices, in the teeth o' the law o' the land, sich as buyin' new grounds, or takin' new lases, underhand, or *coshering** priests, or schoolmasters, or ishers? — ay, faix, Mr. Hutchisson!" she continued, becoming much interested, and looking important—"an', for all we know, 'torney Doolly's journey to Dublin town, that he didn't give even my own sef the sacret of, was to tell on 'em, an' get the fine-money, an' maybe young Dan has the wind o' the business, an' is here on the look-out to cross Micky's palm, an' give him the *hoosh* (hush)?"

"Little likelihood o' that, Misthress Doolly; your husband showed no ill-will to the family of late, you know; he's a forgiving man, and doesn't keep up ould grudges; moreover, I don't think that if the boy abroad wanted to make friends wid your husband this evening, he'd be after doing as he done a minute agone to your husband's wife, Mrs. Doolly."

* Entertaining, or exchanging confidence with:—a statute word.

“An’ it’s true for you, neighbour honey,” assented Mrs. Doolly, with an air of reflection — “but who in the world does he ’spect by the Dilly, then?”

“Perhaps there may be a foreign friar or Jesuit in disguise, coming to them, by the *Fly Diligence*,” answered the landlord, laying some emphasis upon the last words which described the important vehicle, of which he was part proprietor, better than Mrs. Doolly’s familiar abbreviation had done.

“Maybe so,” assented the attorney’s lady; and a second time she seemed mentally occupied.

“The which, Heaven forbid!” resumed the innkeeper.

“An’ why so, Misther Hutchisson?—that is, I mane, God forbid! as yourself says—” Mrs. Doolly seemed rather confused, and after a pause added, as if unconsciously—“though, what harum could one poor pil-garlic of a priest do among us, I wonder?”

“Whist! the Fly Diligence is coming in!” cried the landlord, rising, as a faint cheer of boys’ voices, mingled with the barking of curs, and a remote, vague rumble, which might be taken for the incipient mutters of an earth-

quake, seemed to justify his bold assertion. Mrs. Doolly jumped up also, with a shrill cry of joy and expectation, and saying, "Micky ! Micky, *machree* !" left the parlour : and her friend, Misther Hutchinson thus thought his mind upon the momentary confusion we have just remarked in the attorney's wife—"Ay ; I always said it—Micky *may* be in earnest in his conforming—but there's a good lump o' the Pope in *you*, along with your good dinner, this evening, Mrs. Doolly, my dear."

Meantime, the person he apostrophized, along with all the other persons waiting for the public conveyance, became aroused into great interest and commotion. The rain and tempest had almost subsided, and many darted forth into the street, while the rest crowded together in the porch. Among the former was Dan D'Arcy, whose late gloom and apathy gave way to an almost brilliant expression of face, and briskness of manner, as, bestriding the mid stones of the rugged street, he strained his eyes, unconsciously smiling, in the direction of the coming tumult ; and among the latter was Mrs. Doolly, whose lively solicitude for "Micky machree" did not prompt her to brave the few

last drops of the subsiding rain, that she might prematurely come in contact with her husband.

But even the less calculating expectants in the street saw, as yet, nothing to repay them for their earnestness. True, the shouting of boys, the barking of curs, and the almost appalling rumble, still continued to be heard, and coming still nearer too, but that was all. At length, however, appeared an avant-courier, in the person of the town-fool, a half-clad poor creature who had been born silly ; and he, running and jumping towards the Cross Keys, and flourishing a stick over his head, kept crying out, "We have her at home at last ! here she is ! our own darling of a Dilly !" He was quickly followed by ragged urchins, who had met the great vehicle in the suburbs, and who, sharing in all the poor simpleton's pride of having such a wonder and blessing appended to the place of their birth, loudly echoed his triumphant ejaculations. Presently, round the abrupt turn of the street, some score mongrels came in view, prancing backward, and half-squatting at every prance, without any fear of being run over, while their barking grew shriller, and what had before been a dismal rumble,

now changed into a stunning, crashing noise ; and, finally, the windows dancing, and the very foundations of the houses of the street quailing as it passed, the ponderous Fly Diligence filled the eyes of its admirers. Two of the helpers whom we have previously met on the hill, trotted on, bareheaded, before the horses. These horses were in number four ; their genus expressed by the word *garron*, their coats as rough as a bear's, their ribs as visible as the untiled or unslated rafters of an old deserted house, and along with their other appellations, answering individually to the epithets of the lame, the blind, the aged, and the infirm. Ropes of hemp or of hay, indifferently, with a small remnant of leathern harness, attached them to each other, and to the ark-like building they barely moved along ; for in truth, their jaded and nerveless trot could be rated at no more than between three and four miles an hour, notwithstanding that the self-praising smiles of the postboy, who sat on the bare back of one of the leaders, and of the supreme driver who was enthroned in the huge box-seat, told how much they were satisfied with the unusual spirit of this approach to the Cross Keys, effected by

many a lash at the poor beasts, and by a still greater abundance of crack, crack, round their heads; while a second swarm of curs assisted their endeavours by worrying the animals' fetlocks; and a second detachment of ostlers and stable-boys attended near the fore-wheels in the same view, applying goads whenever a sly opportunity presented itself, "for the honour of the Dilly."

Every human thing must have an end, and the Fly Diligence stopped at the Cross Keys, amid the renewed cheers and barkings of the brats and curs, and the unlimited ecstasies of the town-fool. Before even the inside passengers could descend, it was necessary that the driver, or *conducteur*, should clamber to the ground, to unlock the doors of the vehicle, of which the key was in his pocket, and that other attendants should procure a ladder. The expectant towns-people gathered around him, vociferously demanding to know if their friends were inside, or else under the awning on the top, made of sacks spread over hoops; and to all such enquiries the imperturbable man would only smilingly answer, "Ye'll see, ye'll see," as he proceeded in his duties. Mrs. Doolly, close

at his side, changed some of her interest from repeated enquiries about her husband, to a contemplation of the highly ornamented side of the Diligence, on which were depicted the Cross Keys to the life, and under them the names of the public vehicle and of its proprietors, together with "Latin itself" in yellow letters on a waving blue ribbon, to this effect, "*Paratus ad arma.*" And, "Ay, indeed?" remarked Mrs. Doolly—"P-a-r-a-t-us a-t A-r-m-a-(h)? Musha, what great news the Dilly brings us! Why wouldn't the praties be there as well as here, or anywhere else?"

While the travellers under the awning upon the roof now crept down, to be embraced and welcomed home by their joyous friends, the driver and Mr. Hutchinson simultaneously opened the two doors which gave egress to whoever might be inside. And at this moment, Mrs. Doolly stood at one door and young Dan D'Arcy at the other; only two passengers appeared in the recesses of the interior of the machine. The attorney's wife immediately recognized her husband in the person of one of them, and shrieking her delight, held out her stout arms as he prepared to descend. Daniel D'Arcy looked

hard at the second passenger, his limbs slightly trembling, and his colour coming and going. This person was closely wrapped in an ample foreign cloak, which intruded on his face, so that the young man could not at once see any features. As attorney Doolly moved to meet his wife, Daniel was farther put out, by observing that the object of his curiosity, turning still more away from him, shook hands with his fellow-traveller at parting. "It can't be he," thought Dan, "he would never do *that*; but I'll soon know, now he comes out." Another interruption took place, however. The stranger's light sword became entangled with the lawyer's legs, just as he was about to leave the diligence, and both gentlemen laughed good-humouredly while the accident was remedied.—"No, no," continued Daniel, "Marks it can never be! The sword and all tells against it. My brother is wrecked crossing the sea! or they have stopped him on his way to us since he made the land."

Tears rushed down the lad's cheek; he turned his head an instant to conceal them; immediately the stranger, laughing at Mr. Hutchinson's proffered ladder, jumped buoyantly upon

the stones of the street, and almost at the same instant Daniel D'Arcy was smote by an open hand upon the shoulder, and chokingly pronouncing each other's names, the brothers embraced.

"Come, Dan, let us elude these curious people, and get home to my mother at once," said Marks, soon embarrassed by the gaping and intruding crowd of innkeeper, helpers, driver, passengers, their friends, the little ragged boys, and the simpleton.

"Come," assented Daniel.

"Are not our horses at hand?" asked Marks.

Daniel smiled gloomily, as he answered, "Horses, Marks? you forget, we must *walk* home, or else ride to our mother's door upon the backs of two garrons, worth, at a fair valuation by Micky Doolly, five shillings a-piece, and no more, according to the statute, my lad."

"Oh, I did indeed forget, Dan; seven years in Spain, where the fools couldn't unsaddle me off my pair of jennets, ay, and off another pair, if I needed them, had put all this laughing-matter out of my head. Let us trudge then, a' God's name, since the statute says—so be it." The brothers walked, arm-in-arm, towards the

country, Marks having giving directions about his luggage. "But tell me, Dan, my dear, what, under the sky, can little Micky Doolly have to do with valuing horses, or cats, or dogs, or any other thing, according to the same blessed enactment?"

"I'm glad you ask me," said Daniel.

"And why so?"

"Because, by the way you speak of the hound, I see you didn't know your fellow-traveller."

"What, Dan, my dear boy! was that Micky?"

"It was; the very Micky our father had kicked out of his scullionship in our kitchen, in his thirteenth year, for stealing silver spoons, and that you and I, then mere children, helped to set the kennel after down the avenue."

"Holy mother! I never knew a feature of his face, nor a tone of his voice, all the way from Dublin; and, moreover, found him a facetious travelling-companion, and, I thought, a man of some gentility of manners and appearance—nay, of mind, too. In the name of the fiend—that is, of necromancy—how could little Micky turn into *this*?—what, who is he now?"

Daniel described the attorney's rank and character.

"And, under the same conjuration, by what road has he arrived at it?"

"Why, Marks, after being kicked out of our kitchen, he was sent to one of the new charter-schools in the next county, by a charitable Protestant gentleman; in a few years, put as writing-clerk out of *it*—(the base-born whelp *can* write)—to old Scholes, the 'torney, in this town. Under him, learned his present trade; seduced, and then married, his daughter, with whom he got Scholes's business after the old curmudgeon died; buried her; improved in the craft of robbing and cheating all honest men; and has lately married a second wife—Judy Rafferty, much older than he, who made powers of money of her huckster's shop, at the corner of Back-lane, yonder—first taking Jude to the church with him, to read her recantation, as himself had done, (so he says, at least, but there's some talk about her not conforming in the right way, after all,) because, you see, Marks, there is another law to make every attorney have a Protestant wife, and no less."

"Another law, is there, to such an effect?"

God bless us, Daniel, my boy, you grow quite learned in statute knowledge."

"Do I, Marks? But no matter, I won't think that you come home from ten years' pleasure in Spain, and seeing the world, and making your fortune—(though I wish it had been any other way than by buying and selling, and trucking,)—and studying out of all kinds of learned books in a Spanish college, to gibe the poor younger brother who, rather than leave our mother at home all alone by herself, stayed behind you in this accursed country, where he could neither grow wise, nor rich, nor—" (Dan's voice broke)—"happy, no matter how poor or ignorant, but only try to make up his mind to see such common wretches as Micky Doolly rise in the world, just as fast as he fell lower and lower in it."

During the latter part of this address, Marks had stood still, and looked into his brother's face, not reproachfully, but at first stedfastly, and afterwards tenderly. When Dan ended, he said,

"Gibe you, Dan? I? I, Marks D'Arcy, the brother that, to his fourteenth year, loved you as well as you loved him—and *that* was as well, or better than any other two brothers

ever loved, before or since? I, your old, and almost only playfellow, boxing-mate, companion, bed-partner, to the hour I left you for a foreign land? I—I returned home this evening to—Come, come, Dan, you didn't mean it." And Marks, his tears flowing, seized Daniel's hands, and grasped them fervently; and Daniel, giving way to a rough burst, returned the pressure as, averting his head, he cried, "No, Marks, no—indeed I did not."

"Something lies on the boy's heart," thought Marks; but suppressing his thought, he proceeded aloud, in a rallying tone:—"Tut, I knew so, man alive; you were only afraid I did not come back to Ireland with the freight of brother's love I took out to Spain from it. But wait; although they won't let us make money here, they can't help our getting it from Spain of our own free earning, so long as the ports are left open: or even after that, they can't come up to our mother's house, and break the lid of her strong box. And so, Dan, our mother, and you, and I, shall go in finer colours, though we but *walk* out among 'em, than e'er a Micky Doolly of the town or neighbourhood, and——"

“Don’t speak the base upstart’s name to me—don’t, Marks,” interrupted Daniel.

“Well, and I won’t; and yet, Dan, you *are* a little bit hard on the attorney, since so we must now call him. Trust me, living more at large in the world would teach you some admiration of the talents, at least the industry, and the respectable ambition, which have got him on from what he was to what he is. I have told you before, how pleasant I found his company in that tedious diligence; and as to the early mischance about the articles of plate in our father’s house, Dan, why, we can only say that a silver spoon came ready to his hand, inasmuch as he seems to have been the very man born with a silver spoon in his mouth.”

“He never let you know who he was along the road, Marks?” asked Dan.

“No; though I once appeared willing to know.”

“Ay; and *you* were not so close with *him*?”

“I certainly made no silly mystery of who and what I was.”

“Ay!” repeated Dan, expressively.

“And,” continued Marks, “for that same reason, I now think higher of him than ever I

did ; because, after ascertaining my name, the man, as I recollect, was even more pleasing and attentive than he had been before."

"And what does that prove for him?"

"That he forgets and forgives, my dear Dan, to us and ours, the sorry treatment (sorry enough, however merited) which he received at our hands, once upon a time."

"That's true, Marks. I'll try to think better of 'torney Doolly, and for your asking, if for no other reason ; and, as you say, keeping here at home so much has spoiled me for looking at these turns of the world, as you look at them. Well, I can't help that—'tis home, at any rate.—Stop a bit here, Marks ; would you know where you are this evening?" motioning with his hand to different sides.

The brothers had walked about a mile past the town, and now paused at Daniel's desire upon the steps of a stile which led, by a short cut, to their mother's house ; for such it was still called, even by Marks, although, as the heir of the real estate of his deceased father, and of legal years to assert his claim, he had never yet dreamed of elbowing his mother from her accustomed sway over acres and mansion.

“Should I know where I am, Dan?” said Marks, as looking around he repeated his brother’s words, only venturing to correct one mistake in them, which, we fear, neither the Union, nor Emancipation itself, will ever be able wholly to beguile from the speech of native Irishmen—(observe, critic—ourselves among the number).

To the point at which they now stopped short, their road had been gradually ascending; and, as they turned to look obliquely backward, green height after green height fell from its unfenced edge, until over the last and lowest half appeared their little native town, with its spire, its superior and well-known houses, its lime-tree in the suburbs, its flour-mill, and its bolting-mill, upon the banks of the suburb stream, and its evening smoke curling up into a sky, once more clear and frosty. Beyond it stretched the well-recollected meadows, each bearing its own quaint name, and still intersected with the old familiar frame-work, upon which blankets from the bolting-mill were stretched to dry and bleach; and farther still, arose such a hill, and such a hill, crowned with this house and that house; the whole overtopped by the vivid-

ly-recollected mountain, with two peaks, between the connecting curve of which was caught a glimpse of the seemingly motionless sea.

Half tears and half laughter contended on Marks' face, as he looked; and Dan watched him, and not the landscape, smiling too. After a moment's silence, the elder brother, not changing his regards from the scene, put out his hand from his side, and caught that of the younger, and then resumed.

"Yes, the old, old place; every thing the very, very same, although looking, I know not why, small and shrunk, and peculiar to me. See, Dan, old Phil Homes, the miller, comes out of his little low door, at the back of the flour-mill, just as he used to do ten years ago, followed by his brown dog, or one very like it, his hands in his pockets, and his coat and hat as white as ever. I'd swear 'tis he, though I can't see a feature of his face; and now he sets on the dog to beat about for a rat among the dock-leaves and rushes at the edge of the mill-stream. —Dan, do you remember how often it was the very joy of our hearts to help to start a rat by his side, with the two terriers, Snap and Pincher —poor Snap and Pincher! are they alive yet, Dan?"

"They are, Marks, though crippled with old age ; and I remember what you speak of, well."

"To be sure you do. Why, man-alive, there's not an acre of land within sight, not a tree or bush, not a stock or stone, that we have not learned the name of, side by side, together."

"Not one, I believe, Marks."

"Ha ! ha ! . Well, I do believe, Dan, in my turn, never were two such inseparables of brothers known or heard of—ay, or ever shall be, my boy, speaking of the future—what say you ?"

"I say, Marks," replied Dan, returning the hearty shake of the hand he now got, "that no earthly thing ever can—not even my own troubles—I mean my own wayward humour—ever can come between me and my love for you."

Daniel D'Arcy erred widely in his augury.

"Your troubles, my dear fellow ? What troubles that I do not know of," demanded his brother.

"I took myself up in that word, Marks, and said, my humour ; and you heard me."

"Nay, but come now, Dan, there *is* a trouble in your mind."

"No, nothing," answered Dan, glancing off.

"There is, there is ! and by the light of day,

Dan, you must tell me what !—ay, for the sake of old times, and these old places we again look on together !—Eh, Dan? do you keep your mind from me ?”

“ I have nothing in it to give you, Marks—that is, nothing worth giving—I—” his lip moved—“ I have only been—a fool to myself.”

“ Listen to me, brother. Our interests in this bad world are, and always must be, one. I am a winner so far, for you as much as for myself. Fortune, home, lot, as well as hand, heart, and soul, are yours. Come, Dan, my dear, don’t treat me as a stranger. If you have a want, it shall be supplied—a wrong to revenge, it shall be revenged. Nay, listen again, and do not be hurt with me, although it is a tender point—I know that you long for the cultivation of mind these cruel as well as silly laws would not let you acquire at home—I can assist you in that way too. Surely, they can’t fine, banish, or hang one brother for opening a book by the side of another brother. Dan, I say ! why, my dear boy, what’s this ?—out with it at once, whatever it is !—Come.”

Dan had stood, drawing in, and biting almost till it bled, his under lip, his head still

turned away ; while Marks spoke on, plentiful tears came from his eyes ; he trembled from extreme and suppressed emotion ; and in answer to his brother's last appeal, he now suddenly fell on Marks' neck, kissing his cheek, and roughly embracing him. Yet still the only avowal he would make in words was, "Thank you, Marks—thank you, brother ; but 'tis now no use, and indeed you can hear nothing from me ; only, and I said it before, I have been a fool—a cursed, miserable fool—that's all ! So come up to the house ; our mother is waiting."

He left his brother's arms, and led the way in determined silence ; and they gained the threshold of the house of their birth without any farther explanation. But the reader shall not be kept waiting the humour of Daniel D'Arcy, for in some of the chapters immediately following, it is proposed to anticipate the young man's confession of the cause of that grief which he locked up so closely in his heart ; only, that for this purpose, his historians must be allowed to go back a little.

CHAPTER III.

THE father of Daniel and Marks, Hugh D'Arcy, was a poor man in his early days, with little to give him place in the world, excepting his near relationship to a wealthy and ancient family. The youngest of many brothers, he shared little of the estate which descended in course to the eldest, and was about to try his fortune as a volunteer in the service of some foreign prince—the common resource of Roman Catholic younger brothers in those days, after the laws had passed which totally excluded them from a military commission at home—when fortune dropped a most unexpected favour on his head.

His mother's only brother had embraced the established religion, as much, it was hoped, through sincere conviction, as from a wish to

elude the dawning perils of William's statute-book, and to keep whole and entire the considerable real estate derived from a long line of ancestors. Soon after, the conformist married, but his bed was not blessed with children ; and although his change of creed had much impaired the early, affectionate intercourse between him and his still Catholic sister, he wrote to her towards the close of his life, requesting a visit from one or more of her younger sons. Two were sent, Hugh D'Arcy and another ; but neither seemed to succeed in fixing their uncle's good opinion ; and upon a fierce dispute arising between them and their aunt-in-law, who it was thought had good sway in her own house, the youths received an intimation to end their visit. Years elapsed after this, and the old gentleman made no advance in favour of his sister's family ; but just as Hugh D'Arcy was about to take the step already mentioned, his uncle died, and to Hugh's inexpressible surprise, some weeks subsequently, a will was discovered, putting him in possession of a great sum of money, accumulated during the life-time of the late Jervis Maning, Esquire, by the old process of "levying fines and suffering recoveries" upon

his estate—a sum almost sufficient, indeed, to purchase for Hugh a new property nearly equal to what his relation's had been.

This happened in the year 1703, immediately before the Act of Ann, rendering persons of Hugh's religion incapable of purchasing any manors, tenements, or hereditaments; so that it was fortunate for him that he lost no time in converting his personal property into real. Perhaps it was in some vague apprehension of the future, indeed, that his measures were taken; for only a few months had elapsed, when the penniless younger brother, no longer dreaming of fighting his way to immortal laurels under the auspices of the French King, or of the Emperor, became the proprietor of a fertile tract of land, divided into farms well-let, and highly profitable, and accommodating him with a respectable, substantial mansion. Hugh D'Arcy was handsome, and but another short interval elapsed, until he successfully wooed the portionless youngest daughter of a Protestant neighbour, whose person, mind, and manners, more than reconciled him to her want of fortune; who sincerely loved him, and who obtained parental permission to become his wife,

only because she was poor and he was rich ; her zealous father and mother fully conscious that the Roman Catholic lover—all romance of true love apart—ought to consider himself the obliged and honoured party in the negotiation. Before quitting this part of the narration, the reader is requested to bear in mind the circumstances under which Hugh D'Arcy became possessed of the means of realizing all this happiness.

Whatever might have been her parents' sentiments towards her husband's religion, Mrs. D'Arcy displayed none on that tender subject, materially calculated to embitter her household hearth. Firm in her own creed, she respected what she was bound to consider the errors and prejudices of the man she loved. A usual calculation of future contingencies took place between him and her. The girls who, it was hoped, would spring from their union, were to be Protestants ; the boys, Catholics. And now arose matter really to call up her religious fervour, if it had been very excessive. No girls at all appeared, but in their stead, two boys successively ; and yet Mrs. D'Arcy evinced no regret at her arrangement with her husband, nor

any wish to have him reconsider it. Perhaps the pride which young mothers generally feel in displaying male-children as the results of their first accouchements, assisted her philosophy on these occasions.

But Mrs. D'Arcy soon had reason to regret that her boasted offspring were not girls. In 1709, when Marks was six years old, and Daniel four, and that their father and herself began to look about them for a fitting Catholic tutor, to lead the boys' minds out of the nursery lessons half-learned at home, it became the law of the land, that no Catholic could teach school publicly, or in a private house, or as usher to a Protestant. In this dilemma, Mrs. D'Arcy delicately hinted to her spouse the propriety of engaging a tutor of her own persuasion ; but at first she met a decided refusal from Hugh, whose deeply-rooted prejudices, and, above all, fears of proselytism, took fire at the hint ; and when, allowing him time to reflect, his wife induced him rationally to entertain the subject ; when she pointed out the immeasurable injury threatened to their children from a want of education, and pledged her word that she herself would shield them against

any supposed religious interference on the part of a Protestant tutor ; when the fond father, and deeply-trusting husband, had thus been allowed his second thoughts, and finally assented to Mrs. D'Arcy's plan, another serious inconvenience arose.—No Protestant tutor—such were the spirit of the times—could be tempted to take up his abode under the roof of a Catholic squire for the purpose of educating his Catholic children.

The anxious parents were now compelled to depend upon their own fire-side resources exclusively. Mrs. D'Arcy resolved to add, day by day, to the already (for the time) respectable education she had received, and day by day impart her acquirements to her boys. Hugh also promised to do the like on his part ; but his task was the harder. An Irish younger son, one hundred and twenty years ago, particularly if he showed no extraordinary natural ambition for learning, did not often benefit much by his schoolmaster. The time of civil turmoil in which Hugh D'Arcy had spent his youth and boyhood, farther helped to leave him almost illiterate ; he could indeed, after some study, pen a short epistle, very plainly

written, though not as well spelt, on a solemn matters of business ; and he had a vague recollection of Latin grammar, and occasionally would spout with boyish vanity, and a doubt of his own acceptation of their meaning, some of the examples of the first rules of Syntax, such as—“ *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio est*”—and, “ *Vir nulla fide—Ingenui vultus puer,*”—saying nothing of his attempting now and then to cheat his humble tenantry, as he met them at work in the fields, into a notion that he was a great scholar, by thundering out among them a language of his own invention, not unlike the—“ *boskos thromuldo boskos,*” previously used to frighten the lying Parolles ; but, notwithstanding all this, it may, in truth, be asserted, that Hugh D’Arcy had never arrived at perfection in even the rudiments of learning. And, as has been premised, hence was the self-imposed task of cultivating his mind for his children’s sake, at this advanced period of his life, a heavier responsibility than that incurred by his wife, from the same motive. Let it at once be added, that he never carried his affectionate resolve into effect. Business, he fondly flattered himself, kept his days occu-

pied, and the evenings were therefore devoted to study ; but, with the evening, came the love of ease, entailed upon easy-going men like him, by the happy digestion of dinner, an arm-chair, and a flask of old wine ; and, in a word, Mrs. D'Arcy soon found herself left alone in her noble endeavours to rescue her two boys from the consequences of a law, which, especially to the mother's feelings, deserved to be called as cruel as it was odious.

While the reader's best wishes attend her efforts, he will not expect a great deal from them. At the first view, it will appear that Marks and Daniel could only learn from their mother's instructions what an ordinary English grammar-school would have taught them ; and that, supposing them ever so amenable and industrious, they had little chance of becoming acquainted with eminent literature, scientific studies, or manly accomplishments. And of one of them, Daniel D'Arcy, we must not hope the docility and perseverance which was required fully to take advantage even of the tuition of his gentle mistress. Neither stupid nor refractory, neither disliking his book, nor deficient in love for her who put it into his

hand, still the boy allowed a headlong relish for out-of-door sports to consume the hours he might better have occupied within the house. One tenant's son, some years his senior, was an enthusiastic angler, and Dan would steal out, at all risks, to follow him along the edges of the neighbouring brooks; another made kites of extraordinary stature and beauty; a third, as Daniel grew up, was an adept in snaring rabbits; and the wood-ranger's son proved an individual of surpassing fascinations; so much so, that to spend a whole day out with him, nutting, or bird-nest hunting, or lying stretched in the partial sunlight upon a green patch embowered in the woods, listening to his marvellous stories of fairy love, or of the feats of Finn-mac-coul, or perhaps of the sufferings of the natives of the district from statute law, and its local executioners, was enjoyment which Daniel could not bring himself to forego, in deference to his allotted hours of "book-task," or even to his mother's entreaties and remonstrances. It is true, he never felt perfectly happy in his stolen indulgences; a thought of his mother's frown, or worse, of her regretful tears, always brought a pang to his heart in the very pleni-

tude of his truancy ; nor was he callous to a conviction of acting unworthy of his rank in neglecting the opportunities for growing wiser ; and many a time, when upon returning in the twilight to his father's house, he found himself deservedly punished by coldness at the fire-side, or by imprisonment in a solitary room, while his more considerate and industrious brother sat happy in his mother's smiles, and in his father's exaggerated praises, Daniel has virtuously resolved to mend his ways, and conquer his desultory propensities ; but a bright morning, and the reflux of animal vivacity, acting upon habit, almost as invariably seduced him out again into the open air by a back-door, or under an insufficient pretence ; and, in short, he bid fair to take a place in literary acquirement even humbler than that filled by his father, who, by the way, half-inflamed by a love of ease, half by an ill-defined consciousness that he ought not to interfere in punishing a truant, whom, notwithstanding solemn promises, he had taken no pains to reclaim, scarcely ever exerted parental authority over Daniel's courses, or when he did, it was in a manner so furious and severe as to promise little good

effect; at the same time that Mrs. D'Arcy felt it to be injudicious, and never wished its recurrence.

Of the different conduct of the brothers in the discharge of their duties, two things are remarkable. Although Marks was the more sedulous and biddable boy, he was the more lively,—the more laughing and hilarious; and upon all lawful occasions of sharing Daniel's sports in the fields and woods, showed a heart-and-soul relish for them, and a bounding, elastic spirit of enjoyment much beyond any thing evinced by the now professed truant himself. Next, it is to be noticed, that no sense of jealousy of the dutiful and successful Marks; no envy of the favour in which he stood at home—and, above all, no ungenerous dislike of him, because he was mentally superior, ever stirred in Daniel's bosom to shake the brotherly love of these two boys, which, as they have been heard mutually to avow, had never been surpassed by the love of any other two. And here was visible the chasm in Daniel's character between waywardness and viciousness—between positive good and positive evil. He could not hate his brother for excelling in what he had not the

virtue to attempt himself: although many of the hatreds of this world may be found to spring from a facility the contrary way.

It may even be said, that Daniel's generous feeling of inferiority to Marks, increased his love for his brother—at least, exalted it in quality. Candidly admitting to his own heart, in the midst of all his infatuating idleness, that he did wrong, he was also able to admit that Marks did right; and he esteemed his consistent fellow-student with the species of esteem he would have felt *for* himself, had he equally merited it *from* himself.

His brother's bearing towards him, personally, and upon all occasions, in his regard, through good report and evil report, farther kept alive poor Daniel's warmest affection. The truant's transgressions were ever palliated, if not vindicated by Marks; the same smiling face ever ready to welcome him home from his wanderings; the same brotherly embrace was proffered before they fell asleep, or when they awoke, each night and morning, in the little bed common to both during the years of their earlier boyhood; in Daniel's occasional lapses into industry, Marks would put aside his own book to

speed him triumphantly on with his task ; and sometimes,—indeed it may be said, often—when Daniel ran home from a remote haunt, after having got worsted in an imprudent contest with a host of pugnacious foes, and whispered the event to his brother, the sedulous student would fling away his book altogether, and, in more spirited resistance of parental authority than the “mitcher” had ever ventured to display, hurry off by his side to the ground of contest, burning to renew the battle for Daniel’s honour and glory. In fact, the unusual attachment of the boys, notwithstanding their obviously different characters, was commented upon by all who knew them. And some peculiar proofs of this attachment even administered to the jeer of the less sensitive or more unfeeling. For instance, upon a holiday, both being free, they could not bear to lose sight of each other ; and if accidentally they did become separated, Daniel and Marks were to be encountered along the road from their house, or else in the streets of the contiguous town, each proposing to every person he met the one monotonous question of—“Did you see Marks ?” or “Did you see Dan ?” and never ceasing the

interrogatory until they had again fallen into company.

Thus, with little variety, their lives passed on, and Marks approached his fourteenth year, and Daniel his thirteenth. Then occurred something which really proposed a separation between them. One of their father's elder brothers, an adventurer in early life, as he had been, was known to have found his way to Spain, and there under the protection of a cousin, previously settled in the country, to have arrived at great commercial wealth. Between this individual and Hugh D'Arcy short letters of greeting, at long intervals, had passed, since the emigration of the former; and at last the affluent merchant wrote to Ireland, requesting his brother to send out one of his sons to his care, chiefly for the purpose of having the boy liberally educated in a land which allowed that privilege to persons of his creed; but also in the view of enlarging his knowledge of the world, and of enabling him to add to his means of independence by honourable speculations in traffic.

At the first glance at the case, Hugh D'Arcy and his wife at once destined their truant

Daniel to the good fortune proposed by his uncle. But in a future consultation, they felt that he was not fitted for the venture either in the humblest literary acquirements, or in habits, and perhaps temper and character: and they naturally disliked sending out a son of their's who seemed unlikely to do them credit, to please his uncle, or to succeed in the scheme proposed for the advantage of the whole family. In turning their eyes and hopes upon Marks, another demur temporarily arose. He was his father's heir, and the world might presume, not necessitated to leave his father's house for the attainment of money. But, let the loosely-judging world say what it might, the worthy couple knew to the contrary. Hugh D'Arcy was an extravagant man, though not brilliant or showy in the style of his expenditure; he loved an open house and table, and almost every day in the year had his liking gratified; and this, working along with easy and indolent habits, as to the real state of his rent-roll, promised to lessen the extent of his recently-purchased acres. New statutes, of surpassing wisdom, had also been enacted of late, by virtue of which his most profitable farms materially

decreased in value to him, as well as to their leasehold proprietors; and, in fact, the eldest son and heir of Hugh D'Arcy appeared, from these reasons, to stand as much in need of a timely supply of substantial money, as did the humble cadet of the family; upon which conclusion he was sent to Spain,—a university education in that country being put forward as the sole cause of his temporary expatriation, and in his mother's breast, certainly not rating as the least motive for it.

Daniel could not remain insensible to the fact of his having lost a good chance of making his fortune, on account of his want of common education—of having lost it, in truth, by his own fault; and yet he did not regard his brother's triumph with any invidious feelings. He appeared reflective and saddened, indeed, for days previous to Marks' departure; but it was grief at separating from the brother of his soul which overcast him: or, if his thoughts did revert to their relative merits, and to the advantage he had thrown away, and Marks appropriated, poor Daniel only blamed himself, and tugged at his heart to arouse it into good dispositions for the future.

Never, since the hour he could enjoy sports and exercises under the open sky, had Daniel stayed so long at a time within-doors, as during the days spent by his mother and Marks in preparing for the land-journey and voyage of the latter. Speaking little, and eating little, he was contented to stand in a corner of the room, remote from their bustle, his large, powerful blue eyes watching every movement of the two beings most dear to him; or when they went into another room, he would sadly follow after; and if mother or brother, turning quickly, surprised him in silent tears, the moody Daniel smiled and walked away. The night before the eventful morning of Marks' departure, their mother stole into the boys' room at an early hour, to note how they slept;—they were awake, crying in each other's arms. She kissed them in her own not unhappy tears, and bidding them take repose, left them: returned from her own chamber towards morning, and then found Marks in a deep exhausted slumber, while Daniel still lay broad awake, and still weeping, with his arm round his brother's neck, but doing his utmost to smother his sobs, that he might not disturb the sleeper.

Hugh D'Arcy was to accompany his eldest

son to Dublin: there, a friend had engaged to introduce him to the captain of a vessel prepared to sail for a Spanish port. It had not been arranged that Daniel should also see Marks as far as Dublin, and he put in no claim for the indulgence. The hired carriage and horses stood at the door. Marks, greatly agitated, knelt for his mother's blessing. He received it in a fervid embrace, and, still half-kneeling, turned with out-stretched arms to Daniel: and Daniel flew to him, but it was not to bid him farewell. "No, Marks, no! no!" he cried, in a startling burst of grief, as he dragged him off his knees;—"no! no!"—stamping impatiently and furiously, "time enough in Dublin!—time enough in Dublin!" Father and mother remonstrated, and the former hurried Marks alone to the carriage: but the now thoroughly-aroused Daniel would carry his point. Darting forward, he clung to the wheels of the vehicle with a desperation and a despotic clamour that nothing but cruel force could overcome; and finally, the young tyrant, all unprovided and unclad for a journey, sat in the carriage by his brother, holding him tight, on their way to Dublin.

CHAPTER IV.

THE last words which Marks D'Arcy addressed to his brother, as they parted at the water's edge, were—"Daniel, mind your book now for our mother; she will have only you to teach;" and the sorrowing and remorseful Daniel returned home with his father, determined to do wonders in furtherance of the advice. And for a long time he was indeed a persevering student; but he now had to contend not only with old predilections for fields, and streams, and woods, and idle liberty, but with an inaptness to commit to memory, to comprehend, and, above all, to like his tasks, which contrary habits of mind had begun to fix in him. His mother perceived this, and at first redoubled her zeal to regenerate his mental

powers; but finally confessed to herself, with a sigh, how hopeless was her endeavour.

The pupil, always shrewd and observant, but most so upon subjects in which his heart was concerned, suspected her forebodings, and felt accordingly discouraged. A gloom came over his spirit, cast forth by his conscientious self-reproach of his former misdoings, and by a despair of ever being able to remedy their bad effects upon his capabilities for learning; and he felt the beginning of the greatest curse entailed by "idlesse" and abuse of opportunity at any age,—namely, the dark and wrong-headed conviction, that he was doomed to failure in all pursuits of excellence—doomed to it even in his own want of will to act upon his own abundant power.

Still for more than a year, poor Daniel sat docilely at his mother's side, or fixed in the seat she had pointed out as his place of study, until her return to hear him say his task; never weeping over the disheartening prepossessions of his mind in her presence; humble under her rebuke; galled to the soul's quick that he should still merit it; and all for love of her and of his brother Marks. He would have given

worlds to recall the past, or to make the present and the future profitable for their dear, dear sakes, and that he might be worthy of being their son and their brother, and of being loved by them as they were loved by him. Sometimes, when he did momentarily succeed in pleasing his mother and himself, and when, although her manner was never chilling or too severe, she gave him unusual praise, Daniel would move his seat closer to her's, put out his left hand to receive her hand, and with his right holding down the book, hang his head to hide the crimsoning joy of his face, and the bursting tears, until, despite his precautions, the mother saw them dropping on his fingers, and then her quick embrace and kiss, and her murmured blessing of love and pity—and above all, her hasty retreat from the room—left him a very happy creature.

The poor boy deserved greater success than he attained, for his brave efforts to curb a wayward nature and keep down habitual longings, at this period of his life. The sun of spring or of summer, quivering into the window of his little study through broken screens of green leaves, and smiling him out to well-known

haunts, and to the sports which made them memorable; the brisk twitter of small birds, near the casement, or the steady flight of greater ones, caught passing across the square bit of blue sky framed by its dimensions; the bubble of the brook, heard afar off; the cooing of the wood-pigeons in the recesses of their leafy home; the too-familiar whoop and shout of his old fellow-truant, the wood-ranger's son, set up as much to wile him abroad, as for any legitimate purpose of his calling; all these were sore temptations to Daniel; yet, for a season he overcame them; and (although sometimes with a froward fit of tears) turned his back upon the window, stopped his ears with his thumbs, and fixed his eyes on the page over which his spirit had no mastery.

But Daniel D'Arcy gained his fifteenth year, and could not yet read distinctly, and in the art of writing was still excelled by his father. Upon one occasion he made a great, though ultimately, a vague and vain effort, to wield his pen. Marks wrote him a long letter from Spain. It was read to him by his mother, and then given into his possession. For many succeeding days he did not go out during his

allotted hours of play, but locked himself into his sleeping chamber; and when Mrs. D'Arcy was able to solve the mystery of his conduct, she found that he had employed himself in trying to copy his brother's epistle, imitating elaborately every turn of every letter, but so clumsily withal, that at a glance it was evident that mind had not presided over the task.

In the course of the next year his tutoress became ill, and his regular lessons, such as they had been, were interrupted in consequence. When she could leave her bed and sit up, she was still too languid to call him to her side. Hopelessness of his success also helped to wean her former energy and zeal from its object; and this Daniel still saw, and still without reproach of any one but himself. The only encreased bad result to his mind and heart was a deepening over them of the shadow of self-distrust, self-disrespect, and a belief of foredoomed infelicity. And now, when fears for his mother's life had subsided, he gradually fell into all his old habits, under new modifications. His sports abroad took a manly character, so far as the law permitted him to indulge in them; for it will be noticed, that no person of Daniel's creed

could at this time keep a horse fit for the hunting field, or carry fire-arms to bring down a bird. The wood-ranger's son became re-chosen as his trusty companion—and here Daniel must not be accused of the mean propensity which would lead him to select an inferior crony, when he might have adopted or induced the friendship of an equal ; for, in truth, no lads of his own rank were sufficiently near in his neighbourhood to permit of a choice ; and, as his father could not keep a carriage, for the same reason that he could not go hunting and fowling, remote visiting was out of the question.

The youth so often spoken of, the wood-ranger's son, may be suspected of disingenuous views in devoting himself to Daniel. Mr. D'Arcy often was at a loss to account for the sudden waste of his son's pocket-money ; and though Dan would confess nothing, she believed the individual alluded to could give her full information on the subject. She made enquiries into the character of Dinny, the lad's name, and found it of a doubtful kind. He was fast rising in fame at fairs and patterns, as also at the "*sheebeen*-house," or ale-house, at the roadside ; and a confidential scout once hinted to

her that Dan D'Arcy had been seen entering the latter mentioned haunt by his side, in the dark of the evening.

This roused all the fears of the mother and the lady; and the next evening upon which Daniel absented himself from home, she took her husband's arm, and walked in the direction of the place of ill-resort, determined to confront and confound her unhappy son, should she see him issue forth across its threshold. Such a demonstration of his misdoings was not, however, preparing for her; although she stumbled on another scarce less grievous.

The husband and she had not walked many steps from their house, when her toe touched something on the ground; she stooped, and picked up a parcel, having for its cover certain written paper which she knew to have been in Daniel's possession. She opened it, and found huddled together, rolls of gay ribbons, a flaming silk neck-handkerchief, of the kind then worn by young females, and some paltry trinkets.

"These, Mr. D'Arcy," said the penetrating lady to her spouse, "are loose love-gifts, purchased by Daniel at the last fair, for some

low creature—some designing low creature—brought under the wretched boy's notice by that still more designing knave, Dennis Haggerty : and, believe me, he left the house this evening to present them to her, though here he has dropped them, in his guilty hurry."

"What, Madam D'Arcy !" answered her husband, jollily, "our Daniel a love-maker so soon? The young jackanapes! 'tis an early notion."

"For shame, Hugh," resumed the lady, "to treat so lightly what may be the boy's first step to degradation and ruin."

"Degradation! tilly-vally, dame: the boy is a boy, you know, not a sheep-faced girl; look at me, his father, that now hold an honoured place at your virtuous side; am I degraded? am I ruined? and yet, my dear, at his age—ay, even at his age, if not before it—for human creatures are human creatures, you see, and truth may out at last—"

"Your pardon, husband, there is no necessity that it should.—Oh, the poor, lost Daniel! Would to Heaven our dear Marks were at home to advise and guide him from such courses."

"Ay, my dear, all would be right then; no

fear of your Miss Molly ever vexing us this way, I warrant you."

The conversation turned by Mrs. D'Arcy proposing to pursue the path through the outskirts of a near wood, in order to get within prudent view of the public-house, and watch, unseen, the expected entrance or exit of Daniel into, or out of, a place so ill-suited to his years and rank in the world. Hugh D'Arcy assented with "heartly good-will," declaring himself fully willing to flog his son home from the door-stone, in case an opportunity should occur; for this, indeed, supposed an offence which came within his comprehension; particularly as—to use his own words—"the young disgrace of his family had no need to darken the door of a sheebeen-house, when it was only ask and have, in a genteel, snug way, with his own father, at his own fireside."

The anxious couple accordingly walked along the path which wound through the borders of the wood. It was a fine May evening—the evening, indeed, of the first day of May, upon which, from morning to night, syllabub, of a peculiar Irish admixture, was, and (though not so generally) still is, quaffed in the open air,

upon a hill-side, or in a fair sequestered meadow, or in a grove, wood, or plantation, throughout Ireland. Mr. and Mrs. D'Arcy had not proceeded far between the stems of the trees, which budded freshly and tenderly over their heads, when from some near retreat, a little farther into the seclusions of the wood, they heard young voices, male and female, in joyous conversation and loud laughter ; and it struck upon the lady's heart that the cadences of one of the party were those of Daniel. Communicating her suspicions to her spouse, he agreed, with a gleeish smile very far from his wife's feelings or purpose, to tread cautiously in the direction of the voices, and, if possible, note unperceived the individuals who sent them forth.

Before gaining any point from which an observation could be made, both became assured that their son was one of the yet hidden rioters ; his tones seemed raised in rather boisterous, though merry expostulation, with an affectedly coy female companion ; and one might suppose, while he insisted, and jeered, and remonstrated, and petitioned, and while she repulsed, and laughed, and mocked at him in her turn, that the young pair did not sit far asunder, or sit

very quietly either. Meantime, they could not be quite *tête-à-tête*, for two other voices, at the least, were heard similarly intonated and occupied, and both clamours came from the same spot.

The worthy couple had stopped unconsciously, though somewhat invidiously, to listen, when —“D’you hear that, Madam D’Arcy?” demanded Hugh, in a whisper, laying his hand on his wife’s arm, and looking with mock alarm into her eyes.

“What?” asked Mrs. D’Arcy, though she did not require to ask.

“Something as like the sound —(or it used to be when I went to school)—of four lips, and right young ones too, meeting and parting of a sudden, as ever I heard in my life,” answered Hugh.

“Poh, my dear, let us avoid these young people, however they may be employed,” resumed the good lady, now understanding her husband’s untimely and, she felt, unworthy humour, just as a loud peal of laughter, succeeded to a previous break, only interrupted by the sound spoken of by his father, in Daniel’s very unusual volubility, and still more unusual hila-

rity. And as she stepped on to leave the wood without farther scrutiny—for now she felt the delicate disinclination of a parent and a lady to overwhelm her child with a consciousness of her knowledge of his indiscretion—an unexpected gap in the brushwood allowed her, unnoticed by the young truants, to assure her eyes that “the scapegrace,” as his father called him, was indeed enjoying himself by the side of a pretty sun-burnt girl, (almost a child, indeed,) known to Mrs. D’Arcy as the sister of Dinny Haggerty; while Dinny himself sat at a little distance on the matted grass, equally attentive to a young female of more advanced years than Daniel’s holiday divinity. And at a second hasty glance, the afflicted mother could easily account for the remarkable vivacity and boisterousness of her characteristically sombre Daniel;—noggins, half full of syllabub, lay at the feet of the May-day revellers, and under the spell of the potent beverage, he was half intoxicated.

“This, indeed, must be looked after,” said Mrs. D’Arcy, as she and her spouse now shaped their course back again to the house.

“Buzz, darling! let the poor mump of a boy alone,” counselled Hugh. “God knows, and

we know, it's seldom he has such a play-hour ; and it will do him good, madam D'Arcy, instead of harm. Wait till you see how sweet-tempered he'll begin to look, from to-morrow morning, out."

"My dear husband," insisted Mrs. D'Arcy, "to say nothing of my right, as a lady, to regard this matter differently from you, let me inform you why both of us should consider it seriously. Here is a new fold of the budding of Daniel's nature displaying itself stealthily, away from our observation, out of the climate and atmosphere of home, and carrying a show, as if it shrank from the notice, not to say the approval, of our eyes ; which, on the contrary, had the boy's heart and habits been sound, ought not, and doubtless, in proper season and circumstances, would not have made him feel a fear of being observed."

"And that's true," concurred her spouse, who never differed long from his lady, when once she set her mind against his, and expressed it in the kind of exalted language usual with her, and of which her last speech is an instance.

"Wherefore," she continued, "admitting for shortness's sake, (though my heart does not and

never can really admit it,) your notion of the present harmlessness of Daniel's pastime"—(Hugh smiled at the word)—"indiscretion," pursued his lady, taking herself up, "we must guard, nevertheless, Mr. D'Arcy, against its future chances, when momentary folly may become habitual liking, and the honour and dignity of two ancient families he sacrificed thereto.—You agree, my dear?"

"By all means, darling of the world; only, how are we to guard against all that misfortune you have described in such beautiful speech? I don't think a book will do it, now, at least, by reason it never did it before—barring a book that he can stick a pin into, between the leaves, with his shut up, and cry, 'one, two, three, and a purty picture!'"

"My love," pursued Mrs. D'Arcy, "I grant, in my turn, that something like the interest which now takes the poor boy out of doors, must meet him within doors, sanctioned by paternal tolerance and approval."

"What, Madam D'Arcy? would you hire little Jinny Haggerty as one of the housewomen!"

"Hugh, Hugh!" remonstrated the lady, in a

half offended tone, "when will you keep your thoughts running within bounds? I pray you, note me well. The lad shall meet female companions at home, but female companions of his own rank and quality."

"Beautiful, my dear!—elegant!—the right, motherly, Christian thing;—and where will you come by them, the little pets? I never heard of any of the kind in our neighbourhood."

"Mr. Donovan, your new neighbour, my dear, a gentleman of your own persuasion, who came a-visiting to us yesterday——"

"Yes, dear; and who left the black North, because people of another persuasion made it too hot to hold him," interrupted her husband.

"No matter," resumed Mrs. D'Arcy; "he has two daughters; I saw them when you allowed me to go alone to welcome Mr. Donovan to our neighbourhood, and they shall come over to the house, with your consent; and I know a reason why they may be tempted to come often."

Hugh D'Arcy fully consented, and his wife took her resolution,—one fraught with disasters and sufferings to her family.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. D'ARCY was right in believing that Daniel made too free with the syllabub before she and her husband came upon his revel-hall in the wood ; and it must be confessed that, after her unobserved retreat homeward, he quaffed still another noggin-full. In fact, it was rather late at night when his mother heard his irregular and cowardly knock at a back-door ; and then, stepping between the servants and their duty, she let him in with her own hand, confronted him silently, and not severely, inside the threshold, where, with a wretchedly pale face, rolling eyes, swimming head, and wavering limbs, he stood gazing at her ; lighted him up to his bed-chamber, occasionally assisting him as he reeled from side to side ; and

after he had sunk in a chair, presented him with his-lost-and-found bundle of love-gifts, merely saying—

“ I am glad I stumbled on them, Daniel, for the sake of whatever worthy object you intended should win and wear them—Good-night, my son, and God bless you !” and left him.

In a few seconds she stole back softly to his door to note the effect of her treatment upon him. So far as she could judge, it was as she had anticipated. All the while she had been in his presence, he did not attempt to utter a word, or even to meet her eye, after their first mute encounter at the back-door. Now, giving vent to some startling imprecations against the parcel she had handed him, against Jenny Haggerty, and against himself, she heard him dash the tale-telling love-tokens against the floor, start up, stamp over them again and again, and finally tear them to pieces with—his mother believed—his teeth as well as his hands. Then he sank once more in his chair ; grew silent ; and after a long interval, burst into loud sobs, after pronouncing her name tenderly, and self-reproachingly. His mind changing, he suddenly flung himself on his knees, but mutter-

ing—"No, no--not yet—I'm not fit yet—" slowly arose; walked to his dressing-table, as steadily as was possible; bathed his face; strode back to the end of his bed; knelt a second time, and began to pray in a loud tone, accusing himself, and promising largely for the future; and it was evident that he now thought himself quite sober enough to go through his devotions, although his mother concluded very differently from his whole mode of engaging in them. Finally he got up, and prepared for bed, taking a long time to perform the task of undressing; and when Mrs. D'Arcy stepped into the chamber to see that all was safe, as soon as he gave proofs of being sound asleep, she found that each article of his dress had been carefully and methodically put away, for the first time in his life, doubtless to prepare conviction for himself against morning, that he had not been so very much overcome; although at the same time he had forgotten to extinguish his candle, or even to place it out of imminent danger of setting the house on fire.

Daniel awoke at an unusually late hour next morning. The position of the matured sunshine on the wall of the room told him that he

had over-slept himself. The next moment, his mind rolled back upon him a sickening, appalling tide of recollections, and the still unsubdued syllabub added its physical commotion of head and stomach. Daniel D'Arcy was already punished as he deserved.

Within the next hour he was descending to the parlour, with a slow and conscious step, having first gathered up every scrap of the fragments of Jinny Haggerty's intercepted present, and hid them in his breast, until a convenient moment should occur to consign them to destruction. Entering the apartment, after a pause of hesitation, which to his proud spirit was anguish, he found himself alone. Breakfast for one person was set out on a side-table. He summoned a servant, and inquired after his father and mother. His father was walking about the pleasure-ground ; his mother had gone out, many hours ago, after the usual time of breakfast.

"Many hours ago!—" groaned Daniel, sitting down to his solitary meal. Upon what business was his mother absent?—he again asked. The servant did not know. Had she gone towards the town?—No—but in

what other direction could not be stated to him.

The servant retired, and Daniel looked at the cold-meat, the remains of a pasty, and the flagon of ale destined for his breakfast, but stood up, overcome by nausea, and unable to eat a mouthful; and he felt what an unnatural, what a disgusting thing it was, to see a young healthy lad, like him, turning from his usual and necessary meal, at a late hour, upon that sparkling May morning.

He walked to an open window. His father crossed it; recognized him; stopt; and putting in his head, spoke as follows:—"So, you scapegrace; you came home disguised in syllabub, last night: mark what I tell you; if ever I find you doing so again—if ever you forget yourself so far as to drink liquor of any kind with low people, *out* of your own house, when you can drink the best, and plenty of it, every night of your life, with your equals, *at home* in your own house—by the hand of my body! I'll disown you for your father's and mother's son, and turn you out to herd with the company you like best—" and, after flourishing his stick, the incensed parent walked away.

This little disturbed Daniel; nay, it partially relieved him, for he knew that, so far as his father's wrath was to be feared, it had now passed off. But he had slight awe of wrath of such a kind at any time, and at present it weighed nought. It was his mother he dreaded to meet. Her dignified resentment for an outrage committed against her love, her cares, her tastes, arose, in prospect, with a power to which he quailed: and yet his own love for her had most to do in the feeling. Again and again he asked himself whither had she gone? and, each time, with a vague foreboding that her abrupt and unaccountable absence would prove connected with her anger towards him, and with some terrible though fitting punishment for his unendurable offence.

Unconsciously prompted to dispose himself decorously and humbly for her return, whatever it might produce, he stole back to his bed-chamber, and allowing Mrs. D'Arcy's confidential maid to see him retire, loaded with books, there sat down, and very vainly laboured to fix his mind in study. Dinner-hour drew on, and he heard his mother enter the house, talking cheerily with some strangers who accompanied her. Curiosity now began to re-

lieve the monotony of his fears and remorse. An unusual bustle arose in the house, as if of preparations for hospitably entertaining the unknown visitors. His interest increased: he set his door ajar, and listened. Presently a peal of merry laughter reached him from the drawing room, — the laughter of young, female voices. He stepped out of his chamber, impulsively hurrying to present himself to the company; but the sincere consciousness of not meriting to join his mother and her friends, until he should have previously knelt at her feet, and received her pardon, checked him, and he re-entered his solitary room.

Some time after, a slow step approached his door. He settled himself studiously in his chair, rested his temples on his clenched hands, and assumed all the outward symptoms of deep attention to his book. The door was slowly pushed open; he prepared himself for the worst; it was only his mother's maid bearing him his dinner, and the girl's cautious movements had been the result of her care of the load she carried in her hands.

“I am not to dine below then, Nancy?” he demanded, in a subdued tone.

Nancy supposed not, inasmuch as his mother

had ordered his dinner to be prepared, and taken up to him, that the servants might be left free to attend to the getting ready "the raal dinner for Mr. Donovan and his two lilly-fair daughters, the handsomest pair of young quality" Nancy had ever set an eye upon.

"Very well," Daniel said, stung to the quick—the punishment was growing too much for his nature,—“and now, Nancy, take yourself down stairs again,” he muttered, in a sulky tone, “and that hodge-podge along with you—I want no dinner to-day.”

“Masther Dan, a-vourneen, think of what you’re bidding me do,” expostulated Nancy. “You know this is not the way to come over the mother, and the mother that loves you too, for all she puts on, to make you sorry for last night’s doings.”

“I *am* sorry already,” answered Dan, a little touched, and convinced.

“I’ll go bail you are, Masther Dan; for its not in your heart to be any thing else—only you have a right to the sorrow for a start, your mother thinks, and so I think too, that ever and always was your friend, and had the good word for you, agin the whole house, now and

then ; not in regard o' the sup o' syllabub, that the best of us might happen to take of an odd time, barring that you're hardly enough of a man yet to be getting that a-way, as men do ; but och, Masther Dan, honey, it's that young *sthreel*, Jinny Haggerty, that's the worst o' the business ! a crature of her poor way o' life, and your infarior twenty thousand times over, and no more nor a little minx of a child into the bargain. Fie, for shame, Masther Dan !" continued Nancy, who was a well-favoured girl of twenty, and who perhaps had a vague notion that it would have been a much more decorous thing if her young master had tried his incipient gallantry upon a comely maid-servant of about that age.

" Well, Nancy, and sure 'twas less harm in a little boy, like me, to play push-pin for kisses, with a little girl like Jinny, than, as you say, to be setting myself up for a man before my time, by the side of a great big woman ? "

" Great big woman, Masther Dan ! who talks of a great big woman ? isn't there a madium in all things ? And I tell you once again, there wouldn't be half as much shame or scandale, so there wouldn't, if your early notions

fixed themselves on a 'sponsible colleen, of years to put you right when you'd be for going astray, and taching you how to behave yourself in time."

"Wouldn't there, Nancy?" asked Daniel, rising,—his sulky humour now wiled away.

"No, and in troth, there wouldn't. Aisy now, Sir, I bid you!" as Dan made a chivalrous jump to her neck. "Musha, may I never die in sin, but if you go for to go on with any of your Jinny Haggerty ways with me, I'll ——." Nancy's speech was for an instant interrupted—"Well, now," she continued, standing in feigned amazement and anger, while he retired to his seat, smiling gloomily—"Holy death to me, Masther Dan, but you're the bouldest bit of a *garçoon* ever came to your years, any how; and it's in my mind to tell your mother as much this blessed day, if you don't mind your manners, instead of my going to heap story on story, to make her believe, poor lady, that you're such a great pinitent in your room here."

"You wouldn't do me so bad a turn as that, I'm sure, Nancy."

"Don't be too sure, Sir; but will you ate

your good dinner now, and not be wasting yourself to a notamy, jest for spite agin us all ? To say nothing o' vexing the misthress entirely, by bidding me take it down stairs.—Come, Masther Dan, ate ; sure, it's the first morsel 'ill enter your mouth to-day, poor garçoon."

" Well, and I will, Nancy, only you must do one thing for me."

" And what 'ud that be, Masther Dan ?" stepping back in affected precaution. But Dan was not now thinking of her.

" Say another good word for me to my mother, Nance, and tell her I am sorry to death, and send my petition to see her ; because I won't go down till she forgives me—not out of spite, Nancy, but out of duty to her."

" To be sure I will, Sir, and glad to say or do any thing for your sake,—for my misthress's, I mane, and your's along with it."

" Thank'ee, Nance ; and so, Mr. Donovan has two such handsome daughters, you tell me ?"

" Am I to say that to your mother, into the bargain, Masther Dan ?"

“ Not for the world wide, Nance ; and I guess what you’re beginning to laugh at me for ; but, indeed, Nance, I long to make friends with my mother, as much as to go down and see her new beauties.”

“ Make haste with your dinner then, and I’ll do what I can for you ; and stay quiet in your chair now, Masther Dan, and let me go peaceably out o’ the room.”

Again Daniel entertained no notions derogatory to the assumed prudery of Nance, but her superfluous exhortations hinted to him a repetition of a former offence, and ere she could or would gain the door, his arms were a second time round her neck, and a preliminary little struggle engaged in, when the door opened, and Mrs. D’Arcy stood on its threshold.

With a self-exorcising shriek, Nancy flew down stairs. Daniel remained motionless, overwhelmed with confusion, and somewhat dogged, as was the way of his nature when confronted in even what he knew to be a heinous fault.

“ So, Daniel,” began his mother, after a severe pause, during which her eyes dwelt on him ; “ great as was the cause of my anger against you, last night, you see me here, anticipating

my own resolutions, in the hope of finding you fitly prepared to accept my forgiveness—and is it thus I find you, after all?—Not content with your shameful pastimes in the wood, yestern evening, and still in disgrace on their account, you begin, Sir, do you, to wanton away the time of the most discreet serving-maiden under your mother's roof?"

Daniel muttered something, of which "very sorry"—"unfortunate boy"—(meaning himself)—were the only audible phrases.

"Unfortunate boy, indeed!" repeated Mrs. D'Arcy, turning off.

"Mother, mother," cried Dan, "and won't you let me kneel down, now, and say you forgive me, as you meant to say, when you came up stairs?"

"This new offence cannot be so soon overlooked, Sir," she answered, still retiring.

"D——n then!" exclaimed Daniel, pushing his chair about the room, "and the curse that is on me stick to me, since I am so hardly treated!—not to be let to be sorry, when I *am* sorry! and kept in this room from the first visitors of my own age, and my equals, that ever came to the moping old house!—

D——n, I say !” —and again he pushed his chair about.

His mother walked back into the chamber, shocked at the most violent proof he had ever given of a temper which, however, according to common phraseology, she knew to be “very near him.” Her absolute presence checked Dan’s fury ; indeed, he would not have given way to it had she been previously in the room, nor yet, so wayward is the human bosom, had she been quite out of hearing : and now he stood leaning his forehead to the wall, and sobbed passionately.

“ Look at me, Daniel,” said Mrs. D’Arcy ; and when he had obeyed her command, he saw tears burst from her eyes, “ least of all can you conquer me by these unworthy fits.”

“ They are unworthy, dear mother — they are! — they are !” he interrupted her, falling on his knees.

Now occurred an instance of the only way in which Mrs. D’Arcy wanted judgment in managing her moody son. Such a mind as Daniel’s had certainly required to be mastered, on this occasion, with firmness and an alienation of confidence, and, so far, the lady acted well. But his heart also demanded an instant-

neous return of tenderness, in acknowledgment of the present good feeling it evinced ; and this she refused him, and thereby erred. The impulse of the mother's love sent, indeed, words to her lips for utterance, and half-moved her arms to encircle his neck ; but her lofty notions of propriety, her faith in methodical instruction, and, above all, at this moment, perhaps, her rigid pursuance of a plan, to the forming of which she had dedicated her thoughts of the previous night, and her actions, the whole day, sealed up her lips ere the words could assume a shape, and caused her to fold her arms under her bosom, instead of extending them to raise and caress the humbled offender.

At the same time, her answer to his appeal was, "I rejoice to see you in that attitude, Daniel ; it will do you good ; and when I think you are truly the better of it, reckon upon my again visiting you here : meantime, I must endeavour to entertain, alone, the young friends who have come to see us : " and she finally withdrew.

The black clouds of his character rolled over the fresh burst, the showery sunshine, which it had so recently made. Remorse, neglected and

thrown back upon him, began to change into hardened carelessness; tender yearnings, into indifference: for the first time in his life, Daniel began to question his mother's amiability; and in proportion as the object of his love was in danger of seeming less lovely to him, he was of course in danger of loving his mother the less. And from this little moment may be dated much of the misery which he brought down on his mother's head, although, in truth, his heart never closed against her.

After Mrs. D'Arcy's departure, he remained some time motionless on his knees, his tears dried up, and his sobs repressed, and when he arose, it was but to cast himself doggedly on his bed, where he tossed for hours, revolving nothing, and arriving at no fixed feeling. Suddenly he jumped up, in a mere impulse, left the house unobserved, and, without proposing to do so, made his way to the favourite spot in the wood, the scene of his misdoings of the previous evening. There, flinging himself on his breast, and supporting his head with one of his hands, he relapsed into his recent apathy.

By degrees, the objects, the sounds, and the perfumes of the little solitude around him,

worked the boy's soul into good. Poor Daniel undervalued himself in supposing that his spirit was naturally of a dull and unapprehensive kind. In fact, its want of zest for literary instruction, should be ascribed to a want of the influence upon it of the opportunity and method best suited to its developement; and, unknown to himself, Daniel learnt much from another source—Nature. Beauty, grace, harmony, in the forms of objects, in their colours, and in their scents, in the unclouded or in the clouded heavens, and in the voices of living and of inanimate things—all found a way deeply into him, and cultivated by appealing to his mind and heart, until he could feel them all *in* himself; and sudden tears and smiles would testify this consciousness as he sauntered or reclined abroad, completely alone. And such effects were now wrought upon him, by the virgin green of the half-unfolded leaves, by the gentle curving of some trees, and the stately shooting up of others; by the motion of leaf and bough in the wavy undulating air; by the patches of blue sky, and of yellow clouds caught overhead; by the bunches of primroses and daisies around him; by their odour; and

by the blended music of the wood, the chirping of grasshoppers, the pipy hum of millions of other insects, the chorus of birds, great and small, and the chafing of the unseen brook, and the rustle of the light foliage, sounds not unlike each other. He looked and listened, and breathed the pure and pleasant breeze in and out again, with lengthened heavings and sinkings of his breast. He began to revive and glow, in happy feelings. His mother recurred to his mind's eye, as a being of perfect love for him, and of perfect loveliness, to be loved with his earliest and best return of affection ; and his own errors became naked to his interior glance, and never before had he taken such resolutions to make himself more worthy of his adored parent. From this delightful mood he was startled by a well-known voice, near to him, in the wood, though as yet he saw no one. It was his May-day bacchante, calling upon a pet bird which had strayed from her. Daniel leaped up in an impulse to avoid one, whom, in his present frame of mind, he felt to be an unfitting, if not a degrading associate, and whom he regretted he had ever condescended to make free with. Before he could plunge into the thickets at

the other side of the little open space, Jinny was at his elbow. The girl, though perhaps younger than Daniel, approached to an expression of form, which, along with a precosity of consciousness, derived from gay companions of riper years, to whose influence her mother's early death exposed her, caused Miss Jinny to invest herself with womanly claims upon attention, long before her time. She was not handsome; yet a certain saucy archness and self-command gave her some means of enforcing her pretensions. And whether it resulted from mere unfixed giddiness, or that she and her brother, a shrewd youth, had brought it into something like a plan, Daniel D'Arcy had lately been the object of all her fascinations.

"Tare-an-ages!" cried Jinny, as she appeared, "an' is it you, Masther Dan, come back to the ould place? a body would think you'd be comin' to look for somebody."

"Why, then, a body would think mighty wrong, Jinny Haggerty," answered Dan, solemnly.

"Would they, Sir? oh, very well; but it isn't for nothing *I* come here anyhow—there's that born thief, Jemmy, my stair, (starling,)

an' he hopped off again an hour ago, and won't come to my shoulder for all I can say or bawl to him, whenever he 's after hiding himself—didn't you hear me coaxin' him?" continued Jinny, resolved to prove the special reason of her sudden appearance: and Dan admitted the fact required.

"Maybe he showed himself to you, Masther Dan?"

"No, though he might have been here, for what I know, Jinny; I was not thinking of such things."

"Weren't you, Sir? To be sure, not; why should you, I mean." The girl eyed Dan shrewdly, as he half turned his back upon her. "Well, Sir, the good evenin' to you, kindly—I must go look for Jemmy all through the wood—stop—hould! isn't that the rap o' the world, makin' game o' me on the top o' that tree? musha, I'd like to be a boy to climb up to him!"

"That is not your bird, Jinny," said Daniel, after he had advanced a step towards the tree; "there, he flies off, and 'tis a black-bird."

"An' so it is, an' many thanks, Sir. You wouldn't have time to cross over to the other

side o' the place, Sir, to try an' hunt him out for me, would you? Dinny is gone a-fishing with my ould daddy, or I'd never ax you the word; an' sure you 'll come," she continued, playing some dancing pranks at his side; "if you have half as much time to spare as you had the last evenin'. Musha, but that was a pleasant evening, wasn't it?"

"No, Jinny; it has turned out any thing but pleasant to me; and it wasn't a well-spent evening, either; and it's come into my mind to spend no more such evenings, or mornings, or days, with you, Jinny, or with any body else."

"Arrah, ay, mastair Dan? an' what 'll we all do, now, I wonder?" She laughed gaily, but her heart was stung. "Well, a bright evenin' to you, Sir; there's new-comers at the house, we hear, that bates all afore 'em for the beauty, isn't there? and so, poor people must keep their distance, by coorse.—Jemmy! Jemmy!" screaming to her bird, "I 'll have you, Jemmy, any how, or die by it!"

So saying, she scrambled through the brushwood, and Daniel was again alone. Congratulating himself upon his heroic conduct to the young temptress, he paid his personal merits

the compliment of believing that Jinny's story about her pet-bird was all pure invention. In this, however, he wronged her, as succeeding events proved.

She had departed out of sight and hearing but a short time, when, from a different part of the wood, he heard other female accents, seemingly those of coaxing and condolence, addressed to some suffering object of interest. They drew near; and presently, a girl of about Jinny's age, but obviously of gentle rank, and very beautiful withal, emerged into the open space; she held a starling to her bosom; Jinny Haggerty's truant. The bird drooped one of his wings, from beneath which blood trickled upon the ruff of his protectress, whose soft and musical tones still comforted his sufferings, and assured him of attention.

After advancing some steps, the young lady raised up her head, looked round in some alarm, and muttered, "Goodness! there is no one here!" The same instant, however, she saw Daniel, and drew back from him, still more frightened, as her changing colour proved.

Daniel grew red, instead of pale, and bowing very clumsily, did not quit his place, nor speak,

but only fixed his large, startled, dancing blue eyes upon the beautiful intruder. The girl was not re-assured by his manner; and his appearance, comprehended at a second glance, told less in Daniel's favour. He had never been tasty in his attire; and his every-day suit, for roaming about in, with Dinny Haggerty, was of a half-peasant fashion, and, upon this occasion, happened to be even unusually neglected and graceless, owing to the events of the previous night, and of the passing day. Moreover, as has been remarked of his exterior, at more advanced years, Daniel's figure was rather of the square and burly cast, which gentlemen do not prefer to inherit; so that, altogether, the unprotected young lady felt little confidence in his presence.

"Your servant, Mistress," at last said Dan, in his best way; he advanced, and she shrieked.

"Surely, there is nothing to fear from me," he continued; "I am standing still;" and now he took courage, because he was half offended; "but maybe I can do you some service."

"I have missed my friends," she replied, somewhat quieted, "running after this poor bird, which fluttered down with a broken wing

from a tree near to where we all sat, and I thought I was returning to them, after picking it up, but find this is not the way ; and what shall I do to join them ?”

“ Doubtless I can conduct you to them, Mistress,” replied Daniel ; “ I know all the passes and paths of the wood, and can even guess, maybe, the spot where you have come from.”

“ I pray you, rather let me rest here, till you discover them, then ; I am tired with hurrying after the poor starling ;” and once more the young lady slightly drew back from his offered approach. Without another word, Daniel bounded away, his brow reddening. “ Poor bird, poor bird, how hurt you are !” said the young stranger, speaking loudly, to stifle her fears at being left alone.

“ Poor Jem ! poor Jem !” screamed the starling.

“ Ay, indeed ! a pet ?” she resumed ; “ and whose, pretty one ?”

“ Jinny ! Jinny !” the bird seemed to reply ; and, as if answering his call, Jinny abruptly appeared, her face flushed with passion. She had been returning to fall in again with Daniel D’Arcy, followed by her brother ; who, notwith-

standing her assertion, had not gone a-fishing, and to whom she had detailed her lover's slight ; approaching the sequestered spot in a new direction, she had seen him eagerly spring off to seek the young lady's friends ; had then peeped through the trees, and caught a glimpse of, as she readily concluded, a rival, for whom Daniel so lately repulsed her ; in that rival's hands beheld her stair, wounded and bleeding ; and thus a mixture of violent feelings gave to her face the wrathful expression mentioned.

"Jinny ! Jinny !" screamed the bird.

"Jinny's pet ? and who is Jinny ?"

"Look here an' you'll know, Miss, whoever *you* are !" exclaimed the young virago ; "gi' me my bird, gi' me my bird !" she continued, closing on her new acquaintance ; "give him to me if you're after leaving the life in him ! Oh, murther, murther, see how he's bleeding !"

"I am ready to give up the poor bird to his owner," answered the stranger, "as free of injury as it came into my hands, for it was hurt before I caught it ; but I must first be sure who is its owner."

"Tare-an'-ages ! duv you hear that, Dinny ?" resumed the girl, turning to her brother, who

now stood at her back ; “ she stales my stair, at the first going off, and then wants to make a story-teller of me to my face, saying he is *not* mine? Give, I bid you !” and Jinny seized her supposed rival by the arm, who screamed aloud : the saucy girl’s language had shocked her, and now she was frightened. She did not, however, let the starling escape from the soft pressure of the hand which held him to her bosom, and her enemy continued to drag her by the disengaged arm, when Daniel D’Arcy hastily reappeared upon the scene, and seizing Jinny round the waist, flung her with some force several paces distant.

“ Give the bold hussey her stair, Miss Dora,” he at the same time said, “ and fear nothing further from her. I have seen your friends and mine, and they will be here in a moment.” The young lady allowed him to take the bird from her, and he set it on the ground, over which it speedily hopped its way to Jinny.

“ Oh, poor fellow, poor fellow, an’ is this the way we ’re trated !” cried his mistress, as she picked him up in a fury ; “ your poor wing broke, an’ the blood comin’ from your heart, and my arm amost smashed across, only for saying you *wor* my own !”

"You had better leave this place, and go home to your father, Jinny," said Daniel; "you, Sir," turning to Dinny, "take her away."

"I won't, then, *you, Sir*," answered Dinny, instantly retorting the term of contempt. He had hitherto shared all his sister's feelings of jealousy towards Miss Dora Donovan, and of spite towards his young master, and Dan's violent treatment of Jinny, aided by a vulgar assumption of equality with his companion of the wood and of the field, now threw Dennis Haggerty off the guard of his usual prudence and self-command.

"Take her away this moment!" resumed Daniel, advancing to his bold defendant.

"And what'll your grandeeship say if I don't?" questioned Dinny, also advancing, as he clenched his fists at his sides, and squared his elbows

"What'll I *do*, you mean!" cried Daniel.

"Well, and what's that, Sir?"

"Knock your saucy teeth down your throat!"

"Are you the boy that's able to do as much!" demanded the gamekeeper's son,

coming still closer, until their noses almost touched.

“It never was in him!” said the incendiary, Jinny.

“Try!” exclaimed Dan; and the word was scarce spoken when his antagonist underwent the experiment to his cost. But he was about two years older than Daniel D’Arcy, and therefore as able as willing to retaliate, so that a deadly conflict ensued between them; Jinny exalting her shrill voice to encourage her brother, after every blow, and Miss Dora Donovan screaming in terror, and ready to drop down from faintness. But the battle proved a short one, for Mr. and Mrs. D’Arcy, and Mr. Donovan and his elder daughter, Helen, quickly appeared to bid it end. So far as it went, however, Daniel was the victor; for Dinnis Haggerty lay at his feet when his father, flourishing his stick, led him apart; and although the marks and effects of many hard blows were visible on his forehead and face, the insolent “follower of the family” showed in a still worse plight, and moreover was weakened and exhausted.

And this proof of Daniel’s prowess, over a lad his superior in years as well as in pugna-

cious experience, made Mr. D'Arcy's heart glad and proud, and at once restored our hero to the full favour he had temporarily forfeited by his late misdoings. Hugh clapped him on the back, and now dragging in an embarrassing allusion, paternally recommended him to "do the same, the longest day he lived, against high and low, rich and poor, for the sake of a fair lady," (and here the fair lady glanced at, clung closer to the arms of her father and of her elder sister, as she and they stood at the utmost distance allowed by the open space in which the scene was enacted.)

Even Mrs. D'Arcy, the stately and fastidious as well as amiable and high-minded Mrs. D'Arcy, was surprised out of all her methodical displeasure against poor Daniel, as she flew to his side, and, only alive to the mother's anxiety, applied her handkerchief to the wounds on his face, and peered at them to ascertain if any were dangerous. She did not fail, indeed, to cry out shame upon such an encounter between a young gentleman of condition, and one of the menials of his father's service; but when her husband insisted on the necessity of the case, and Mr. Donovan mildly abetted him,

and even Miss Dora contributed a word which was more spiritedly re-echoed by her more spirited sister, the punctilious lady quite softened her speech towards the bleeding champion of beauty, and affectionately took his rough hands in her's, and kissed his swollen and bruised lips. And Daniel then fell in simple earnestness upon his knees, for the second time that day, and was utterly forgiven the packet of love-gifts, the syllabub, Nancy, and all.

Meantime, Mr. D'Arcy proceeded to deal upon Dennis Haggarty: (as to Jinny, she had vanished into her native woods the moment the awful party caught her eye.)

The discomfited son of the gamekeeper, regaining his feet, was skulking away: Hugh D'Arcy ran after him; caught him by both ears, and, holding his grip, faced him round to the company. Then followed a torrent of abuse against Dennis, as well for previously attempting to lead Daniel D'Arcy into evil ways, as for his present offence; and against Jinny, as his abettor and auxiliary seducer; and against their father for—(if nothing else)—for *being* the father of such a graceless son and such a saucy daughter; and the lecture ended by Hugh commis-

sioning Dennis to convey to his innocent parent peremptory orders to remove from his employment and his grounds, early the next morning. The lad listened in sulky silence, not even wincing under the severe pinches occasionally inflicted upon his ears, and, without word, a look, or salutation, withdrew into the thickets.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. D'ARCY leaning upon Daniel's arm, after having vainly requested him to lean upon hers, led the way homeward, her thoughts now chiefly occupied with arranging, in anticipation, the various emolients and plaisters which were to be forthwith applied to his face. She could not resist, meantime, certain recurrences to the alarming scene which she had just partly witnessed. Endeavouring to forget her scruples upon the score of Daniel not having had a more worthy foe, or done battle with more becoming weapons than his naked fists, and also trying to compound with her notions of order for having been compelled, as it were, to forgive him his late offences full twelve hours before the allotted time, the good lady still drew

comfort from the whole occurrence. It had begun in a deadly quarrel between Daniel and Dinny Haggerty and his sister, and ended in, she trusted, the eternal separation of the hitherto bosom friends. That was a happy chance for her wayward and vagrant son. It had also involved his first meeting with a young lady whom Mrs. D'Arcy hoped might particularly interest him, and under circumstances which, considering the years of the parties, bid fair to speed her hopes; ay, even more effectually (although this was regretfully admitted) than the first meeting she had herself arranged for them could have done. But here arose new caution and new calculations in Mrs. D'Arcy's breast; she would have to take care lest the incidents of this self-same propitious rencontre between the young people did not too quickly mature the very mutual interest which, ultimately, it was her object to allow both to indulge towards each other, but which, on Daniel's part, at least, must, according to her plan, be recognised and countenanced only as the reward of years of good conduct and merit, in different ways. And full of these thoughts, and determined to begin to act im-

mediately upon them, Mrs. D'Arcy arrived at home with her party.

Somewhat to the derangement of her now fully-restored equanimity, Daniel, with a smiling and bluff indifference of manner, declined his mother's plaisters and attentions, and bounded up stairs to his bed-chamber, leaving her gazing after his flight in a reprehensive silence. But smoothing her brow, Mrs. D'Arcy turned with her guests into the dining-room, where supper was laid out, and continued the working of plans more important than that of curing a few scratches upon her boy's face.

No sooner had the lady seated herself at the head of her table, than she ingeniously led to a conversation which was necessary for her purposes, and contrived so to time and apportion it, that, at the moment Daniel entered the room, it proceeded onward from the very point upon which his mother wished to fix him. Some little interruption first took place, however, as follows.

"Why, Daniel, my dear boy," said Mrs. D'Arcy; "I declare, now that you have doctored yourself, I *was* frightened more than I need to have been about you."

"I told you so, mother dear," answered Daniel; in fact, a basin and towel had helped to remove from his face all serious appearances of hurt; a few little knobs on his forehead, and a swelling of his under-lip, into a pout rather becoming than otherwise, being the only symptoms of his late combat; and while we are mentioning these facts, he is stooping down at his mother's side to receive and return her proffered embrace.

"And, on my word," continued Mrs. D'Arcy, "it has done you good, altogether, to absent yourself from us, this little while: stand out there, Dan, till your father sees you:" and Dan, blushing until the partial suffusions caused by Dinny Haggerty's knuckles were lost in the pervading crimson, exhibited to the company his light-brown hair carefully divided upon his forehead, and flowing in some order down to his shoulders, his fresh neck-cloth neatly tied, and an entire Sunday suit of clothes disposed with unusual skill. His father, leaning forward upon his cane, eyed him jeeringly, now and then changing his regards to Miss and Miss Dora Donovan; and the latter-mentioned of these young ladies looked down into her sister's

lap, where she held her sister's hand in her own, her features all seriousness, and her cheeks redder, if possible, than Daniel D'Arcy's; while the former enjoyed our poor hero's little dilemma with a sly vivacity of glance, and an archness of smile respondent to her host's broad and merciless raillery.

"Yes, he's well enough, this evening," said Hugh D'Arcy, coughing.

"And I am obliged to him for remembering how he had to spend the evening," resumed the mother.

"Upon my word, mother," said Dan, half rallying, but still not at his ease, though he spoke with great simplicity, "Nance did more of it than I."

"Um," continued his father; "Nance; ay; go along and sit down there, you big booby, you," nodding to a vacant seat beside Miss Dora, while he touched Daniel with the ferrule of his cane in the side. But instead of immediately obeying his parent's command, Dan looked wistfully round the table, as if for another seat, and many little awkwardnesses occurred before he finally took the place allotted to him.

And now supper commenced, and Mrs. D'Arcy renewed her topic.

"Truly, Mr. Donovan, your permission that I should so far endeavour to lighten their late loss to your dear girls, gives me very great pleasure, at the same time that I avow it, the highest honour ever conferred upon me."

Daniel was all attention.

"The pleasure and the honour both ought to be felt by them and me to the greatest extent, Madam D'Arcy," said the grave Mr. Donovan, his voice, look, and manner, regulated by, perhaps, an extreme of the old politeness, while that again was subdued by a succession of many sorrows.

"And," he continued, "my poor girls and I *do* feel your kindness, as it ought to be felt, be assured, Madam;—what, my loves?" he turned towards them, his eyes moist, and his lip in motion. Dora's tears fell fast into her lap, upon her sister's hand, while her looks were still cast down; and even the sprightly Helen showed that she keenly felt the appeal, although she absolutely employed herself in passing an arm round Dora's neck, and gazing steadfastly upon her face, as if to divert or soothe her younger

sister ; “ and yet,” added Mr. Donovan, “ allow me, without any ungrateful reservations, to say, that we never could suffer ourselves to become so deeply your debtors, did not these foolish laws make our compliance necessary, by forbidding to the youthful of our religion, the opportunities for public, or even private tuition, at the hands of strangers, and throwing our boys and girls upon such help as their fathers and mothers alone can afford ; or, in the absence of father or mother, as a compassionate and honourable friend may be disposed to lend.”

“ Though I am not of your communion, Sir,” resumed Mrs. D’Arcy, “ yet I can fully enter into your case, for indeed I have had experience of it, my children being brought up according to their father’s wishes.”

“ According to agreement,” interrupted Hugh ; “ come, Madam D’Arcy, speak fair.”

“ Well, and by agreement, as you say, Mr. D’Arcy ; nor did I wish to forget as much : but, to continue, Mr. Donovan ; Marks, my elder son, is now in a fair way, I hope, of escaping the doom of ignorance passed upon him, at home ; but there sits my poor Daniel, my own dear boy, who hitherto has had no more than

the scanty tuition his mother was enabled to impart."

"Little more," interrupted Hugh, again; "for I do not pretend to aver that I gave much positive help, having had so many other important matters to occupy me; if, in truth, a great attention to his hours of task-study counts nothing."

"And," continued Mrs. D'Arcy, "it is plain that, although a lady may be competent to assist in the education of ladies, she can hope to contribute but little to the forming of the mind of a gentleman."

"Indeed, mother dear," said Daniel, whose eyes were fixed on Mrs. D'Arcy, since she uttered the first affectionate phrase in reference to him, and whose face now glowed with generous pleasure and conscientious disinterestedness, "indeed, and indeed, you were, and are able to teach me a great deal more than I ever YET would learn from you, as I ought:" and his mother fully understood the future promise meant in the emphasis he bestowed upon the word "yet."

"Have you got beyond embroidery-stitch, 'yet,' master Daniel?" whispered Helen Donovan, bending across her sister.

Daniel half-started, and looked staringly into the young lady's eyes, at first believing that she meant to offend him; but the archness, which was struggling into only good-humoured laughter through her affectation of gravity, soon set him at his ease, and presently they broke into a merry peal together; the serious Dora, all the while that she reprovably pressed her sister's arm, also venturing to glance up into the face of her new acquaintance, and then to smile in such a sort as was meant to explain and excuse Helen's freedom.

Mrs. D'Arcy was beginning to take Daniel gently in hand for his loud laughter, which he now kept up alone; but Mr. Donovan's patronizing smile towards the young group, and her husband's nods and authoritative signs, checked, for this time, a display of her sense of decorum. The following speech from Mr. Donovan also diverted her attention.

"It has been in my mind, Madam, to lay before your judgment what I am now going to say, and your last words may give leave for the introducing of it. I admit that, however accomplished a lady may be, nay, although to the utmost which a lady *can* be"—(bowing to

Mrs. D'Arcy, who graciously and gravely bowed in return)—“she is, nevertheless, somewhat unfitted to perfect the education of one of us of the rougher sex ; but if I may speak of myself, mayhap I could passingly assist in the tuition of Master Daniel D'Arcy, while you, Madam, occasionally pursue your generous intentions towards my girls, and while your good husband attends to as necessary duties ;” now, bowing to Hugh, who answered by a repetition of gladsome nods, which at once expressed his gratitude for the offered service, and for the little polite fiction that echoed his own recent explanation of the causes of his inaction as a pedagogue.

Mrs. D'Arcy, meantime, had, by this proposal, arrived at one important point of her anticipation, and her acknowledgments were eloquent both in words and manner.

“You hear, Daniel, my dear ?” she continued, turning to her son.

Daniel was looking down when she addressed him, the tip of his fore-finger resting upon the edge of the table, and his features and air betokening a deep and pleasing abstraction of mind, and tears now trembled on his lids as he

answered—"I do, mother, I do; I do hear, and understand too; thanks to you, mother; thanks to you for every thing, as well as for this; and thanks to you, Mr. Donovan—many thanks, Sir."

"Well! but are not the poor childer to stand up in one class together?" asked Hugh D'Arcy.

His lady and his eldest guest looked inquiringly at each other for an arrangement of this little point, hitherto unconsidered; Daniel at them both alternately, hoping a certain adjustment of it; and Helen whispered Dora, to some effect that again caused her grave younger sister to smile, and press her arm in an appeal for silence and forbearance.

"Sometimes, I *do* think," was Mrs. D'Arcy's answer at length to her husband's question.

"And I agree, Madam," said Mr. Donovan, again politely pausing for a detail of the lady's views.

"It strikes me, Sir, that on some occasions these young ladies may be best benefited by attending to me alone; on some occasions, my poor boy, by attending to you alone; while, now and then, they and he may with profit

receive your instruction in class, as Mr. D'Arcy has remarked—now and then, mine.”

Still Mr. Donovan agreed ; Dan looked happier and happier ; Miss Donovan again disturbed her sister's softly, serious mood ; and Hugh said—

“ So far, so good ;—yes ; and at all times they will be the better of hearing one another in their tasks, to prepare for the time of standing up to say them.”

“ As often as possible,” concurred Mrs. D'Arcy ; and then the subject was further discussed in its more minute branches. Pursuant to the general plan of divided tuition, occasionally, and occasionally of lessons in class, it appeared evident that, perhaps for a week at a time, the young ladies should visit Mrs. D'Arcy, accompanied by their father, and, afterwards, Daniel might go home with his friends, and spend about as much time under Mr. Donovan's roof, whither Mrs. D'Arcy would often repair. And, as good measures cannot too soon be engaged in, the very next day was appointed for a joint examination by the domestic schoolmaster and schoolmistress, of the state of forwardness, in different branches of ac-

quirement, of the three pupils, with a view to their future progress together; and Mr. Donovan accepted an invitation to assist in the investigation in the friendly house which at present sheltered him. In fine, the party broke up for the night, with a concluding caution—namely, to keep as a profound secret their knowledge of Mr. Donovan's undertaking to play the pedagogue, particularly in behalf of Daniel D'Arcy, lest some invidious and ultra-loyal neighbour might seek to apply to the offence the letter of the statute then in strict force against all of that gentleman's creed, who should attempt the education of youth publicly, or in a private family.

Before retiring to his sleeping-chamber, Daniel got a cordial hand-shake from his future tutor, an unusually violent one, followed by a very affectionate slap on the cheek from his father; a kiss, which out-breathed a sigh of pleasure, upon his other cheek, from his mother; a familiar nod, and a sparkling smile from Miss Helen, with a whisper—"be a good boy, and get up betimes, and mind your book, to-morrow morning;" and from Miss Dora—but *their* parting for the night merits one word to itself.

"And you, Mistress Dora," said Dan, stepping close to her, and bowing gracelessly—"a good-night to you, too."

"A very good-night, Master Daniel," answered Dora, making a profound reverence.

"Thankee,—and I hope, Mistress Dora, your little fright in the wood won't—won't, I mean—" he stopt short.

"Disturb her gentle repose," supplied Helen.

"Yes,—thankee, Mistress Helen—yes, indeed," agreed Daniel, eagerly.

"Nor the hurt that fright got for you, Sir, disturb—" began Dora, looking up at his nobby forehead and inflamed lip—which, however, was redder than the reddest rose, and therefore — (perhaps this has been intimated before) handsomer than usual.

"Nor the hurt that fright got you, Sir, disturb it, either," again added Helen.

"Whose sleep?" asked Daniel.

"Yours, Sir — fie, now, Helen," answered Dora.

"Oh, I see," laughed Dan, awkwardly — "you're just *full of fun on me*, this evening, Mistress Helen—and on your sister too—hurt? is it these little things hurt me?—poo!—not the least in life—and so, the good-night over

again to the both of ye, ladies; and you're welcome to your jest, Mistress Helen—ha, ha!—good night!—”

He was leaving the room with a very bad grace, when his father cried out to him to stop: advanced; took his hand: led him back to his fair new acquaintances, and said, “Why, you sheepfaced disgrace of the family! is that the way your father’s son bids good-night to the two little beauties under his roof? kneel down on one knee, this moment, or I’ll—” raising his cane—Daniel knelt much amused, but not acting his part lightly or charmingly, except that, to some eyes, utter simplicity, shown even in inelegant embarrassment, may have a charm—“present hands, now, for a hand of each lady,” continued his father. He did as he was commanded, and his mute supplication was answered—“Salute the darling little hands, now, one by one, I tell you!—stop! Miss Donovan’s first—there—what are you doing, you rap!” roared Hugh D’Arcy as, with a slight scream Miss Donovan snatched her hand away.

“It will bite, Sir!” answered the young lady. “Take care, Dora.”

Daniel went through the imposed ceremony

upon Dora's hand, however, without arousing her terrors, and while Mr. Donovan smiled only a barely tolerating smile on this scene of Hugh D'Arcy's getting-up, and while the lady of the mansion looked downright disapproval, our hero finally escaped in blended confusion and delight, embarrassment and glee, to bed.

Entering his sleeping-chamber, he knelt, to offer up his nightly prayers, in a purer spirit and with a happier heart than he had commanded upon the same occasion about twenty-four hours previously. And in a short time he lay down on his little bed, in a frame of mind which we are glad to reveal to our readers by the help of a third person.

Ere the first cloud of slumber began to roll over Daniel's mental vision, a well-known soft footstep sounded on the landing-place outside his door; light streamed through the key-hole into his rayless apartment; and Mrs. D'Arcy cautiously and gently entered, a taper in her hand, and a sedate joy blandly glowing over her beautiful features.

"You need not take such heed—I'm not asleep yet, mother," said Daniel, as she advanced on tiptoe to his bed-side.

"Then 'tis as well you are not, Dan," she replied, "for, in order to banish for ever out of my head our parting of last night, I have just come into your room that I might bid God bless you, as you slept; and now I bid it to you waking;" she stooped over him, and touched her lips to his.

"And God bless you, mother; and I am glad you do *not* find me asleep," said Daniel.

"This is a happier night to you than the last, my dear boy?" she resumed, sitting on a chair at his pillow, and taking his hand.

"Oh, mother, dear, 'tis the happiest I ever knew;" he earnestly returned her soft pressure; "for it shows me more than ever that you love me well—not meaning to say I once doubted you did—but still it shows it more than ever; and, for that same reason, my heart is better at peace with itself than ever I knew it to be; and my thoughts bent, in earnest, to try and give you the return I know you'll like to get from me."

"Then *you* like the prospect of being assisted by Mr. Donovan in your studies, Dan?"

"Oh, indeed and I do, mother; and—but I'll make no more promises; but wait, mother,

and, with God's blessing, maybe you'll see I do: the blessing you prayed down upon poor Dan's head this night."

"Under it, my dear Dan, your good endeavours must come to good; and, tell me—you feel no dislike, neither, to try and improve yourself by the side of his daughters, now and then?"

"None in the world, mother dear; only this much I'll tell you, after all; I'm a little afraid of their being more bright at their book than I am, or knowing more of it than I do."

"Well, Dan,—suppose so—what then?"

"Why, mother, I'd be shy of letting them see how backward I am."

"Oh, my dear, do not give way to such a fancy: if those young ladies are really better educated for their years than you are, which, as yet, I cannot answer for, of course they will readily make allowances for your want of opportunity."

"It's very good and loving of you to say that, mother, considering how I used the real opportunity I have had: but, supposing right reasons for their being of this mind, do you think it will ever come across their thoughts?"

“No doubt ; I am sure they are both good and considerate enough to allow of its occurring to them, Dan.”

“There’s one of them the sharpest creature I ever met, at her years,” continued Dan, thoughtfully.

“Which do you mean ?”

“Miss Donovan, the oulder of the two.”

“Oh, you give too strong a word to the young lady’s sprightliness, Dan, my dear ; Miss Dora, however, is your favourite, it seems ?”

“Now, I declare to you, mother,” he replied, speaking rapidly and over-earnestly, while the mother’s watchful eye saw his cheeks flame,—
“I declare to you that it never once came into my head to say to myself which I liked, or which I didn’t like—there wasn’t the time for it, you know—and besides, mother, would it become me to make so bould ?”

“Well, Dan, I respect your modesty : and, as you say, there certainly was not time for you to form any opinion of one young lady or the other ; besides, it grieves me to remind you that our amiable young visiters are, I believe, the very first ladies, in fact the first persons of your own age and rank, and of the other sex

with whom you have been made acquainted; hence, much of their manners and conduct must needs appear particular in your eyes, and, until you grow more used to it, perhaps strange or embarrassing, now and then."

"And there you speak the truth, mother; and I felt what you say before, though I did not see it clearly: and, to tell you the truth, in return, I wasn't myself in the young gentlemen's company, to-night—one of them, at least, I mean; I wasn't their equal, I thought, though I know I am; nor free to talk, and look, and say and do, before them, the way I used to talk and look, and do and say, before others."

"All very natural, Dan, and to be expected: but it is just as much to be expected that you will soon alter your sentiments on this subject."

"And you think it will come round, mother?"

"And why should I not, my dear? you *know* you *are* their equal, you say,—at least in birth and station in the world: and the new course you determine upon pursuing, from to-morrow morning, forward, will speedily give

you the feeling of perfect equality in every other respect."

"Will it make my behaviour better and freer — and — and more like a gentleman's, mother?"

"To be sure, my love: manners, above all other things, are learnt from associates: and as you are to be more at home with us all in future, you know, you need have little fear on that score."

"Thanks to you, mother, many thanks," murmured Daniel. He felt in his heart the delicate allusion contained in the last words: and while he spurned, in remorse and self-accusation, his late low-lived friends of the woods, and their cronies, (whose vulgarity, by the way, had long been making inroads upon his manner, and even upon his phraseology and tones,) Daniel D'Arcy glowed with the noble ambition of future amendment — an ambition now unchilled by any of his former melancholy forebodings, because set in action by more than one of the most powerful motives which human nature can supply. His mother watched him close, and thanked Heaven, as she had a right to do, for so speedy an appearance of good

results from her virtuous, though elaborate plans; and with a parting salute, and without a remaining fear of the wiles of the wood-ranger's son, or of his more dangerous sister, retired to her own sleeping apartment.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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